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VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT

**ONE AND HOLY:
A PROPOSAL FOR A KOREAN REFORMED ECCLESIOLOGY**

ACADEMISCH PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van de graad Doctor of Philosophy aan
de Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam,
op gezag van de rector magnificus
prof.dr. V. Subramaniam,
in het openbaar te verdedigen
ten overstaan van de promotiecommissie
van de Faculteit Religie en Theologie
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Seung-Chan Park

geboren te Suwon, Republiek Korea

promotoren:

prof.dr. E.A.J.G. Van der Borgh
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[Chapter 1: Introduction]

1.1. Introduction

This research explores the way in which the unity and holiness of the Church can be rendered together without polarisation in the Korean Reformed context. The majority of the Reformed churches in Korea accept "*credo sanctam ecclesiam catholicam, sanctorum communionem*" from the Apostle's Creed, which affirms the belief in the Church as *one* and *holy*. The Reformed tradition has produced several major works on ecclesiology that have addressed the unity and holiness of the Church. Yet, there persists among the Reformed churches a deep dissonance in the understanding of unity and holiness due to divergent confessional and doctrinal proclivities and the concrete reality of divisions among them.¹ In fact, "*credo ecclesiam*" is regularly confessed in most of the local churches from the Reformed tradition during worship service. However, the seriousness of the dividedness of churches has formed a perpetuated uncomfortable coexistence between their common confession "*credo ecclesiam*" and the opposite ecclesial status quo. This continuous phenomenon asks a nagging question in the conscience of believers, seminarians, pastors and theologians: are we living up to what we confess about the Church—one and holy?

There have been numerous practical and organisational approaches to tackle the disunity of the Church, not only among the churches with similar theological background, but also among the churches that do not belong to the same theological tradition. However, despite such efforts, the churches are still in want of real and substantial success. It should be underlined that the problem that stems from the unresolved relationship between unity and holiness cannot be fundamentally resolved through merely practical or organisational methods. Instead, it calls for an in-depth theological and more specifically ecclesiological answer.² Without the search for an ecclesiological discourse via a thorough investigation of the matter and form of existent ecclesiological thoughts, any organisational attempt will prove to fall short. Both the scrutiny of ecclesiological voices and the theological exploration on the constructive way forward must be attempted, and such practice should not only be grounded in the Reformed tradition but also involve the possibility of gaining insight from outside voices, such as ecumenical ecclesiology. What is necessary, then, is a theological analysis of the existent mainline ecclesiologies from the Korean Reformed tradition that reflect thoroughly Reformed character as well as ecumenical sensitivity. Also, a theological scrutiny of a Reformed ecclesiology outside the Korean context is expected to give insight to the current ecclesiological discussion. Last but not least, a study of ecumenical ecclesiology is required that is dedicated to the concern for the unity (and holiness) of the Church. Accordingly, the aim of the research is to examine the current major ecclesiological discourses with particular attention on the subject of the unity and holiness of the Church and to seek a constructive approach that will be able to bring them together. For this purpose, a study of the ecumenical ecclesiology of Faith and Order as well as the Reformed ecclesiology of G. C. Berkouwer will be provided, together with a theological analysis of the ecclesiological thoughts of the major Reformed voices from Korea. The research will conclude with an attempt for a constructive ecclesiological thesis.

¹ Cf. Sung-bihn Yim et al, "Reformed theology in Asia and Oceania", in *The Cambridge Companion to Reformed Theology*, ed. by Paul T. Nimmo and David A. S. Fergusson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 301-302.

² There exists serious division—maybe even hatred—among the union organizations themselves, e.g. the Christian Council of Korea and the National Council of Churches. Moreover, Son highlights the denominational dividedness along with the lack of theological and academic communications even among Protestant denominations, not to mention the Roman Catholic Church. He also points towards the mutual hostility between separated denominations in Protestantism that has been expressed through severe mutual reproach (Won-young Son, *Theopraxis Ecclesiology* [테오프락시스 교회론] (Seoul: Dongyeon, 2011), 224-225.).

1.2. The Subject of the Research

In spite of the impressive growth of the Reformed/Presbyterian churches in Korea, they have gone through serious ecclesiastical schisms, creating more than one hundred denominations.³ External factors exist for this phenomenon - e.g. the remaining socio-cultural influence of Confucianism, the socio-economic self-centredness of the local churches in connection with the rapid economic development of the Korean society, and the lack of genuine ecclesiological concern in their regional context and on an inter-denominational level, to name a few. But more notably, the fundamental reasons for divisions are generally regarded as revolving around the doctrinal/confessional divergences among different denominational groups.⁴ The instances incorporate fierce debates on the doctrine of Scripture,⁵ the issue of Shinto shrine worship during World War II,⁶ and last but not least the disagreements over the legitimacy of joining the membership of the World Council of Churches in the 1950s.⁷ The most distinct schism in the 21st Century was caused by the controversy over the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Busan, Korea in 2013, on which a number of articles and books were published for argumentation either for or against the Council.⁸ It discloses the prolonging nature of the same issue of the division of the churches up to the present day.

Now, this situation begs an important question: is the phenomenon of division an isolated matter in which ecclesiology does not play a role? This seems unlikely. Considering confessional/doctrinal determinants for the former disputes and subsequent divisions up to the present day, it seems clear that the ecclesiological discourses surrounding the unity and holiness of the Church are closely connected with the reality of disunity. The way in which holiness is comprehended in association with unity has a critical influence on how events and discourses are interpreted and conceptualised by churches and individual believers. In this vein, a sharp inquiry should be made on whether holiness and unity in a particular ecclesiological understanding are adequately brought together or theorised in a compartmentalised manner. It also begs the question whether such an approach is to be considered theologically legitimate. A critical analysis of main ecclesiological voices, therefore, is required so as to engage with the proposed questions.

The Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches has investigated the question of the unity of the Church from the early 20th Century and recently produced the convergence document "*The Church: Towards a Common Vision*". Due to the sheer number

³ Cf. Byung-joon Chung, 'A Reflection on the Growth and Decline of the Korean Protestant Church', *International Review of Mission*, 103/2 (2014), 322, 328.

⁴ For the influence of Confucianism especially in regards to the acceptance of doctrines, see Joon-sik Park, 'Korean Protestant Christianity: A Missiological Reflection', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 36/2 (2012), 59-60. As to the socio-economic backdrop, see Byung-joon Chung, 'A Reflection on the Growth and Decline of the Korean Protestant Church', 329-333. Won-ha Shin comments on the presence of Confucianism from the early period of Korean Protestantism (Won-ha Shin, "Social Influence is Possible When the Church Restores Its Churchliness (1)" ["사회적 영향력, 교회가 교회다움을 회복할 때 가능하다 (1)"], in *Ecclesiology* [교회론], ed. by Ministry and Theology Editorial Department (Seoul: Duranno Publishing, 2012), 108-109.).

⁵ Cf. Harvie M. Conn, 'Studies in the Theology of the Korean Presbyterian Church. III, Conflict and Disorder—1945-1949: A Historical Outline', *Westminster Theological Journal*, 30/1 (1967), 49.

⁶ Cf. Myung-hyuk Kim, 'Christian Unity and Reconciliation in the Korean Context', *The Ecumenical Review*, 66/1 (2014), 36.

⁷ Cf. Yong-gyu Park, *한국 기독교회사 II (1910-1960)* [*History of the Korean Church II (1910-1960)*] (Seoul: Word of Life Press, 2004), 970-1014.

⁸ Cf. Sung-soo Choi, "The Calling of the Church from the Perspective of the Gospel" ["복음의 눈으로 본 교회의 소명"], in *Ecclesiology* [교회론], ed. by Ministry and Theology Editorial Department (Seoul: Duranno Publishing, 2012), 23.

of denominations that have been participating in the ecumenical movement of the Council as well as their recent major ecumenical achievements in ecclesiology, the Faith and Order Commission's ecclesiological work should be considered a worthy partner for a serious theological dialogue. Theologically speaking, it would be amiss to miss out the possible ecclesiological insights from it, especially for a constructive thesis. It is then worthwhile to critically discuss the material in light of its contextual background to seek fresh and important insights on the unity and holiness of the Church in the Korean Reformed context. In addition, when it comes to the Reformed perspective, it would be suitable to study and examine the ecclesiological works of G. C. Berkouwer—*De Kerk I, II*—published in 1970 and 1972 respectively. Despite being a Reformed theologian, Berkouwer had an ecumenical outlook and was involved in major ecumenical events such as the Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches in New Delhi in 1961 and the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) as an observer.⁹ His involvement in both events took place before the publication of his ecclesiological writings, which intimates a strong presence of ecumenical outlook while being rooted in the Reformed theology. Thus, it is significant to combine the investigation of these materials with the research into his ecumenical context. Through the textual and contextual studies of the works of Faith and Order and Berkouwer, important insights are expected to emerge for the constructive ecclesiological thesis on the unity and holiness of the Church.

By doing so, what is expected in this manuscript is the finding of a possible ecclesiological framework of the unity and holiness of the Church, where the one does not silence the other but the two come together. The examination of the existent ecclesiological discourses will be done in order to discern whether they do full justice to "*credo ecclesiam*" or request major or minor revisions and which aspects of their arguments should be given positive consideration and promoted in the attempted establishment of such formulation. The theological interaction with Faith and Order and Berkouwer will also serve this main purpose, and, in this sense, the dissertation will consistently have the focus of interest on the "way" in which unity and holiness are formed.

1.3. The Importance of the Research

This research into a theologically sound understanding of the relationship between unity and holiness in the Christian Church has several important connotations that involve doctrinal discourses and the concrete life of the churches in Korea, particularly those from the Reformed tradition.

As aforementioned, the depth of the present division among the churches is nothing less than pervasive and unremitting, and seminarians, pastors, missionaries, and laypeople probably have noticed such problems at least once in their lifetime. These factors relay the practical significance of this research. For instance, seminarians have to cope with the question of how theologically justifiable it is to vindicate their own denominational line of theology in rejection of other voices—as the theological exchange between divided seminaries has not been promoted. The unresolved issue of the reality of division influences their ministry at local congregations, since their theological interest in ecumenical engagement would not likely claim the main characteristic of their works and thoughts, but the central attention would be almost exclusively paid to their own individual congregations. On the other hand, as it often happens, the laypeople might meet their Christian colleagues in their workplaces and wish to establish a fellowship, Bible study or prayer meeting with them during the weekdays. They inevitably come to notice their differences in the context of discussion on Scripture reading, corporate prayer, or other kinds of activities.¹⁰ This reality is likely to urge them to

⁹ Cf. Dirk van Keulen, 'G.C. Berkouwer and the Council', *Trajecta* 22 (2013). See also, Cf. Eduardo Echeverria, 'The Accidental Protestant', *First Things: A Monthly Journal of Religion and Public Life* 24 (2014), 41-45.

¹⁰ Kim correctly points out that not only the pastors and theologians, but the laypeople in Korea also have their own theological views (Myung-yong Kim, "The Necessity of Understanding the Nature of the Church" ["교회 의

approach their pastors with serious questions regarding "how" to work together with Christian colleagues from different traditions within their working environment. The difficulty in adequately answering such inquiries suggests the real presence of the need for an ecclesiological understanding that is capable of grappling with the underlying theological issues in a biblically legitimate and relevant way.

These seemingly practical matters ultimately demand an adequate theological answer, which cannot be simply identified with either mere dogmatic fundamentalism that refuses to interact with other Christian traditions or superfluous relativism that lacks genuine Christian conviction rooted in Scripture. The theological stalemate concerning the disunity of the Church along with its wide range of ecclesiological concerns hits hard the life and witness of the Church. Compromising the holiness of the Church is not an option even for the sake of visible unity; such attempts would only further divide the churches as it lacks sufficient Scriptural and dogmatic support. The ecclesiological impasse engenders subsequent seesawing between unity and holiness in terms of theological emphasis, which unavoidably ends up with the re-affirmation of the pre-existent doctrinal positions against the background of the stalemate in solidified ecclesiastical polarisation. The very theological character of the relationship between the unity and holiness of the Church makes it impossible to comply with the idea that a mere organisational or practical approach would suffice, calling for an in-depth theological approach.

Although the subject matter of the dissertation might be considered specific to the Korean context, this ecclesiological work on the unity and holiness of the Church intends to contribute to further ecumenical and global debates on the relationship between unity and holiness of the Church. The current work might evoke new questions among a variety of churches with different ecclesiastical, socio-cultural, and confessional backgrounds. This is because unity and holiness are neither minor nor ignorable issues that the churches face. While the manner in which the questions are formed and stimulated might differ, such questions challenge many churches and demand responses. This connotes the importance of the nature of the inquiry. Therefore, while this investigation is primarily on the Korean context, its outcome and potential significance are not necessarily limited to one region, but could be extended to other contexts, as well.

1.4. Research Question

On the ground of these observations, this research will look into the theological understanding of the way the unity and holiness of the Church come together in ecclesiological formulation. It is hypothesised that the Faith and Order's convergence document on ecclesiology *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* and Berkouwer's ecclesiological work *De Kerk I, II* will provide significant insights to the contemporary ecclesiological discourses in the Reformed churches in Korea, mainly because of their common concern over unity and holiness. The real inquiry is, then, pertaining to the way in which the works by Faith and Order and Berkouwer can help to formulate an ecclesiological discourse that is capable of bringing together the unity and holiness of the Church in the Korean Reformed context. Therefore, the main research question is as follows:

How can the ecclesiological insights of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches and of G. C. Berkouwer help to construct a theology of the Church in the Korean Reformed tradition in a way that the unity and holiness of the Church are mutually supportive instead of being mutually exclusive?

본질 인식부터 회복해야한다"], in *Ecclesiology* [교회론], ed. by Ministry and Theology Editorial Department (Seoul: Duranno Publishing, 2012), 99.).

1.5. Research Methodology

This research is within the sub-discipline of systematic theology. As a methodological consequence, the research will mainly proceed through the analysis of literature. Primary documents will be examined within their specific contexts and accompanied by a diachronic scrutiny over the relevant sources that point at the trajectory of the historical development through which they are composed. The secondary materials are to be brought in discussion with regards to the former as well as the latter aspect of the study so as to gain a better understanding in both areas. Nonetheless, the largest portion of the work is to be devoted to the theological analysis of the primary documents published by Faith and Order, Berkouwer and the Korean theologians. Hence, *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* by Faith and Order, *De Kerk I & II* by Berkouwer, and the ecclesiological works by the Korean theologians will receive central attention.

As far as the historical and contextual dimension of research is concerned, the ecclesiology of the Faith and Order Commission points towards the major assemblies of the World Council of Churches as well as the several significant conferences of Faith and Order. Their works exhibit noticeable theological developments especially in the concept of unity and mission of the Church against the backdrop of certain ecumenical interactions and transitions, such as the shift in the membership of the Council. The official reports on the assemblies by the Council and Faith and Order are judged important materials, while the secondary writings on the assemblies and Faith and Order will be employed for the sake of clarification and further explication as deemed necessary. Concerning Berkouwer's ecclesiology, it is reckoned worthwhile to inquire into the course of the development of his ecumenical perspective via his interaction with other traditions from the early period of his career up to the most recent time before the publication of *De Kerk I & II* in 1970 and 1972 respectively. Berkouwer's own works that are produced via his ecumenical involvement necessitate principal attention, and the relevant historical analyses by secondary authors' will be utilised for further insights and clarification. In respect to the ecclesiological thoughts of the Korean theologians, the contextual analysis will mostly concentrate on the most relevant and recent milieu where fierce ecclesiological debates were sparked around the issue of unity and holiness of the Church, namely the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Busan in 2013. Due to the contemporary nature of these disputes, occurring within the 21st century, they will be touched on shortly instead of enjoying substantial treatment.

After finishing the analyses of the documents of Faith and Order, Berkouwer, and the Korean theologians within their historical contexts, the research will continue with a constructive theological chapter. On the basis of the evaluations of the sources in the analytical chapters and in dialogue with biblical scholarship, a more adequate theological formulation will be tested that can become an ecclesiological basis for a new relationship between Korean churches, one that is based on a more harmonious understanding of the relation between the unity and the holiness of the church.

1.6. Thesis Outline

The sequence of chapters is envisioned below in accordance with the research question and methodology as discussed above.

Chapter 2: Unity and Holiness of the Church in the Convergence Ecclesiological Statement of Faith and Order *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* (2013)

This chapter provides the textual and contextual analysis of the convergence document of Faith and Order Commission *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* (2013). The focal point of investigation will be on the way in which unity and holiness are identified and formulated in mutual relationship. The contextual study mainly involves the historical development of ecclesiology since the early period of the ecumenical movement in order to better understand the argumentation of the main document itself. The major assemblies of the World Council of

Churches and Faith and Order Meetings that put forth distinct ecclesiological concepts will be targeted for analysis. The study of the main material itself will not contain all the possible areas of argumentation in a comprehensive way, but will sustain the concentrated interest in the unity and holiness of the Church. The other subjects in ecclesiology as set forth in the document will only be explored when deemed necessary. Substantive critical engagement with the text will not be provided in this chapter, as it will be handled in Chapter 5.

Chapter 3: Unity and Holiness of the Church in G. C. Berkouwer's Ecclesiology in *De Kerk I, II* (1970, 1972)

The task of this chapter is to study G. C. Berkouwer's ecclesiology on the unity and holiness of the Church as expressed in *De Kerk I, II* (1970, 1972). As Berkouwer's ecclesiological thought is not dissociated from but is formed through his ecumenical engagement, it is considered vital to explore his ecumenical context. In the contextual investigation, primary consideration will be given to the way in which Berkouwer interacts with his dialogue partners on the ecclesiological subjects with respect to the unity and holiness of the Church and the topics that are significantly related. Similar to the previous chapter, the contextual research in this chapter largely serves the purpose of a clearer understanding of the main text. The study of the primary material will be preceded by the investigation into Berkouwer's well-known key concept of "correlation". Without clarification, the concept will likely cause confusion and misunderstanding as to motif and meaning. It will also shed important light on his approach to ecclesiology in *De Kerk I, II*. The textual analysis will directly focus on the unity and holiness of the Church. Berkouwer's discussions on catholicity and apostolicity will not be endowed with separate sections but will be introduced intermittently whenever it is deemed relevant to either unity or holiness. This chapter will not postulate critical assessment of his ecclesiology, for it will be performed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 4: Unity and Holiness of the Church in Korean Context

This section will delve into the mainline Reformed ecclesiological thoughts in Korea. The contextual exploration will not be a lengthy survey of the historical development of the Korean Reformed theology from the early period of Korean Protestantism; rather, it will deal with the ecumenical contexts that are most relevant to the contemporary ecclesiological discourse, highlighting the ecclesiological issues to be dealt with in the dissertation. Since the research aims for a constructive proposal for a Korean Reformed ecclesiology in an ecumenical context, the subsequent theological analysis will involve the ecclesiological perspectives of three theologians from the Reformed tradition. The analysis will take note of their divergences in ecclesiological content and frameworks and dogmatic convictions. As this investigation focuses on the unity and holiness of the Church, the way in which unity and holiness are perceived, interpreted and conceptualised is of major interest. Theological critique on the ecclesiological views of these theologians will be provided afterwards. Chapter 5 will contain the main subject of discussion in hand as it attempts to offer a proposition.

Chapter 5: One and Holy – A Proposal for A Korean Reformed Ecclesiology

The aim of this chapter is to deliver a constructive ecclesiological thesis on the unity and holiness of the Church in the Korean Reformed context. For this purpose, the previous discussions on *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* by Faith and Order and *De Kerk I, II* by Berkouwer will be gleaned for insights. Next, the scope of investigation will be further narrowed down as it zooms in on identifying and diving into the subjects that are both closely related to the unity and holiness of the Church and relevant to the Korean ecclesiological discourses as explored in Chapter 4. The assessment will entail critical interaction with Faith and Order and Berkouwer's ecclesiology to devise the main argument. It will be succeeded by the suggestion of a proposal for a Korean Reformed ecclesiology on the unity and holiness of the Church. The theological analysis of the ecclesiological thoughts of the three Korean theologians from the previous chapter will be drawn into the dialogue in order to sharpen the context-specific aspects of this ecclesiological thesis.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This chapter will recapitulate the previous chapters and put forward the outcome of the research. The last section will articulate further research suggestions that would stem from both the implications and the limitations of the dissertation.

1.7. The Limitations of the Study

In relation to the aim of this research, the demarcation of its inevitable limitations needs to be stated. First of all, due to the ecclesiastical backdrop against which the current work is performed, other ecclesiological perspectives, especially the Roman Catholic and Orthodox voices, will not be brought into the discussion. The reason is that it is the primary task of this dissertation to deal with the "way" in which the Reformed ecclesiology in the Korean context is formed, one which retains an outlook on unity and holiness that is still recognisable for churches of the Reformed tradition. Through engagement with ecumenical voices, openness for other insights will be encouraged without losing the authenticity of its particular convictions in the concrete context of "here and now". It signifies that, despite the inclusion of the ecumenical ecclesiology in content, concentrated attention will be paid to the Reformed ecclesiology.

Second, since the argument focuses on the "way" in which an ecclesiological framework is to be formed in order to involve both unity and holiness in one portrayal, a limitation is anticipated particularly in the area of the possibility of elaboration on all the ecclesiological elements—either dogmatic or practical—that have to do with the life and witness of the Church. Even though it does not mean an absolute exclusion of any discussion on the components that belong to a larger ecclesiological discourse, the scale of the dissertation will simply not allow a detailed investigation into all the subjects included in ecclesiology. In line with the acknowledgement of the limitation, a desirable result is that the explication of those elements, whenever they are brought up in association with the main argument, will be rendered in an intelligible manner, whereas the last chapter will make the suggestion of the areas that might be significant in further research.

[Chapter 2: The Unity and Holiness of the Church in the Convergence Ecclesiological Statement by Faith and Order – *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* (2013)]

As this chapter intends to investigate the Faith and Order Commission's convergence document "*The Church: Towards a Common Vision (CTCV)*", firstly it is necessary to investigate the historical development of *CTCV*'s ecclesiology, especially as it relates to the unity and holiness of the Church. It means, at the same time, that the scope of this study is not comprehensive but rather focussed on ecclesiological dimensions revolving around unity and holiness. Accordingly, the main document *CTCV* will be examined as a whole with special attention to the subject matter of the dissertation. Following the inquiry over the ecclesiological development that led up to *CTCV*, the main document itself will be studied with special attention to the focal subject matter.

Concerning the inquiry over the ecclesiological development precluding the *CTCV*, the section "Historical Note" in *CTCV* provides information as to the particular materials that call for investigation. Instead of speaking of all of the works that have ever been produced by Faith and Order, this part alludes to several major developments that emerged on the ecumenical scene and have led to the convergence on ecclesiology. Its explication follows the historical order, from Lausanne to Santiago de Compostela, covering the main gatherings before the publication of "*The Nature of Purpose of the Church (NPC)*", which is a preliminary study on ecclesiology published in 1998 that finds its output in *CTCV* in 2013.

2.1. On the Way towards *The Church: Towards A Common Vision*

2.1.1. Initial Stage of Faith and Order from Lausanne (1927) to Edinburgh (1937)

CTCV refers to the first World Conference on Faith and Order held at Lausanne in 1927 that discussed 'the nature of the Church' and the 'relation between the one Church we confess and the divided churches we experience in history'.¹¹ The initiative for such a conference was the result of the 1910 World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh. Following the vision "*The Evangelisation of the Whole World in this Generation*" as expressed by Mott, mission societies and major protestant denominations gathered to look for ways to ameliorate the missionary effort to the colonial world that had taken shape during the 19th century.¹² They had identified divisions among the churches and that the competition among them was a major obstacle for the effectiveness of the Christian witness.¹³ The conference came to recognise the significance of unity for strengthening the mission of the church. In one account, Bishop Brent from the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, as deeply

¹¹ Faith and Order, *The Church: Towards a Common Vision*, Faith and Order Paper No. 214 (Geneva: WCC, 2013), Historical Note.

¹² Müller-Fahrenholz illustrates that 'Mott was keenly aware of the process by which the Western powers of trade, industry, science and technology were opening up the world', and highlights that he interpreted this phenomenon in terms of God's 'providential kairos' for the world to hear the good news of Christ'. This sentiment was not Mott's only but shared by 'the founding generation of the ecumenical movement (Geiko Müller-Fahrenholz, "History", in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, 2nd Edition, ed. by Nicholas Lossky, José Míguez Bonino, John Pobee, Tom F. Stranksy, Geoffrey Wainwright and Pauline Webb (Geneva: WCC, 2002), 525.)'.

¹³ Cf. Brian Stanley, *Christianity in the Twentieth Century: A World History* (Princeton/Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2018), 128.

inspired by the Edinburgh Conference in 1910 about the vision of the unity of the Church,¹⁴ suggests to 'the House of Bishops' at the 'General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA' to appoint a commission that would 'bring about a Conference for the consideration of questions touching Faith and Order'.¹⁵ The Commission intended to include 'the Church of England, the Roman Catholic Church, the Old Catholic Churches, and the Orthodox Churches'.¹⁶ The proposed methodology to be utilised was comparative ecclesiology by which the differences and points of agreement were brought to the surface.¹⁷

This preparatory material for the World Conference of Faith and Order already manifested the major concerns in ecclesiology in relation to the visible unity of the Church, involving the nature of the Church, the Gospel, the common faith, sacraments and ministry, etc. The World Conference in Lausanne in 1927 housed '385 men and nine women' from '108 Churches – Lutheran and Reformed, Old Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, Methodist, Congregational, Baptism, and Disciples'.¹⁸ Speaking of ecclesiology, the nature of the Church in the Lausanne report is rather brief and succinct. It enunciates the Church's dependence on God, not on 'the will or consent or beliefs of men whether as individuals or as societies'.¹⁹ Jesus Christ is notified as the Head of the Church, and the Holy Spirit is 'its continuing life'. The Church is explained to be 'the communion of believers in Christ Jesus', 'the people of the New Covenant', 'the Body of Christ', and 'the Temple of God'. The foundation of the apostles and prophets is recognised, not to mention Christ's being 'the chief corner stone' of the Church. The Church's identity as God's instrument by which 'Christ, through the Holy Spirit, reconciles men to God through faith' is noted as well. The oneness of the Church, which is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic, is dependently linked to the oneness of Christ and the Holy Spirit. The essential characteristics of the Church revolve around the concern of faith and order, including the confession of faith, the proclamation of the gospel, the administration of the sacraments, the pastoral office, the fellowship in prayer and worship, the pursuit of holiness, and the service of humanity.²⁰

In 1937, the Second World Conference on Faith and Order was held in Edinburgh and it 'concluded with the conviction that questions about the nature of the Church were at the root

¹⁴ It is reported that, after the Conference, 'he told his friends that he had made the resolve to call his own Church to take the lead in preparing another world conference that will wrestle with the 'matters of faith and order which had been excluded from the Edinburgh programme' (Tissington Tatlow, "The World Conference on Faith and Order", in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517-1948*, ed. by Ruth Rouse and Stephen Charles Neill (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1967), 407.).

¹⁵ David M. Thompson, "Ecumenism", in *The Cambridge History of Christianity Vol. 9: World Christianities c.1914-c.2000*, ed. by Hugh Mcleod (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 55. See also, Tissington Tatlow, "The World Conference on Faith and Order", 407. In less than a decade, the strong presence of the Episcopal Church in the advance of the Faith and Order movement subsided. 'The idea of the Faith and Order Conference, the promotion of the idea on a world scale, and the money that made it possible' derived from 'members of the Protestant Episcopal Church' (Tissington Tatlow, "The World Conference on Faith and Order", 410.).

¹⁶ Tissington Tatlow, "The World Conference on Faith and Order", 409.

¹⁷ Tissington Tatlow, "The World Conference on Faith and Order", 410. The principles set up by the Commission in 8 May 1913 in New York successfully reflected these characteristics: consideration of differences and agreements between churches; no enforcement of a particular system of ecclesiology; and quality of formulation of questions by the erected Committee. Tatlow comments that these principles were not those from which they would ever move away (Tissington Tatlow, "The World Conference on Faith and Order", 411.).

¹⁸ Tissington Tatlow, "The World Conference on Faith and Order", 420-1.

¹⁹ World Council of Churches, "Lausanne Conference Reports", in *Convictions: A Selection from the Responses of the Churches to the Report of the World Conference on Faith and Order, Held at Lausanne in 1927*, ed. by Leonard Hodgson (London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1934), 229.

²⁰ World Council of Churches, "Lausanne Conference Reports", 229. Even though the author has not added [sic] to all the parts of citations where it is required, he is aware of the need for using gender neutral terminologies.

of most of the remaining dividing issues'.²¹ The sections of the report were: *the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; the Church of Christ and the Word of God; the Church of Christ: Ministry and Sacraments*; and *the Church's Unity in Life and Worship*.²² The report featured a christocentric interpretation of the Church and used a comparative ecclesiological method. The desired unity in the second World Conference is understood in terms of a federational model for promoting cooperative actions among the churches. The importance of intercommunion is also underlined, signifying the eucharistic fellowship in fullness. The federational model gets considerable weight in comparison to the model of organic union, as the Church without any type of organization or institution is not deemed even imaginable.²³

2.1.2. Ecclesiology at the Amsterdam Assembly (1948)

The first Assembly of the World Council of Churches that merged the two distinct movements—Faith and Order and Life and Work—took place at Amsterdam in 1948. The approval of the convergence of Life and Work and Faith and Order was birthed from a growing realisation that the absolute separation or separated disquisition of faith and order and socio-ethical concerns was undesirable. The historical context of Europe kindled the awareness as to the nature of the church and her identity in relation to state and society.²⁴ At the same time, the World Council of Churches confirmed that it did not intend to form any sort of superchurch structure with strict institutionalism and authority, as stressed in 'the constitution concerning authority':

'The World Council shall offer counsel and provide opportunity for united action in matters of common interest...It shall have authority to call regional and world conferences on specific subjects as occasion may require. The World Council shall not legislate for the churches; nor shall it act for them in any manner except as indicated above or as may hereafter be specified by the constituent churches'.²⁵

Regarding the doctrinal basis, the new World Council of Churches accepted the christological basis developed by Faith and Order: *the acceptance of Jesus Christ as God and Saviour*. It became the doctrinal Basis for the Council, which the churches could use to decide on whether to join the WCC. On the other hand, the interpretation of the phrase by respective churches was left to their discretion, not to be forced by the Council in any fashion.²⁶

It is observed that, 'despite their oneness in Christ, the churches were fundamentally divided into two mutually opposing understandings of the Church shaped by a more "active" or a

²¹ Faith and Order, *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* [CTCV onward], Historical Note. See also, Faith and Order, *The Second World Conference on Faith and Order Held at Edinburgh, August 3-18, 1937*, ed. by Leonard Hodgson (London: SCM Press, 1938), 257-259.).

²² Tislington Tatlow, "The World Conference on Faith and Order", 431-433. See also, Faith and Order, *The Second World Conference on Faith and Order Held at Edinburgh, August 3-18, 1937*, 224-269.

²³ Faith and Order, *The Second World Conference on Faith and Order Held at Edinburgh*, 250-253.

²⁴ Nils Ehrenstrom, "Movements for International Friendship and Life and Work, 1925-1948", in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948*, ed. by Ruth Rouse and Stephen Neill (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968), 575. Ehrenstrom notes as follows: 'The German Church struggle, and the emergence of the Churches as the only powers able to exert an effective resistance, even to the point of martyrdom, to totalitarian aggression, brought the idea and the doctrine of the Church again into the centre of the picture' (Nils Ehrenstrom, "Movements for International Friendship and Life and Work, 1925-1948", 595.).

²⁵ W. A. Visser 't Hooft, *The Genesis and Formation of the WCC* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1982), 49.

²⁶ W. A. Visser 't Hooft, *The Genesis and Formation of the WCC*, 50. Visser 't Hooft relates that the matters of safeguarding the Basis as well as endowing an ecclesiastical character were spotted as being a possible stumbling block at the Westfield College meeting in 1937, which was followed by the Utrecht Conference in 1938 that discusses the Council's authority, the Basis, and the structure of 'representatives to the Assembly and the Central Committee' (W. A. Visser 't Hooft, *The Genesis and Formation of the WCC*, 44, 48-50.).

more “passive” understanding of the role of the Church in God’s salvation of the world’.²⁷ The difference of theological approach to Church unity constituted tensions. Persons who were heavily involved in the Life and Work movement were more inclined to maintain that cooperation in socio-political actions would actually unite churches in a more constructive manner than solely engaging in doctrinal discussions and comparative methodology.²⁸ In response to the dividedness, the Council report ‘The Universal Church in God’s Design’ emphasized the unity of the Church as something *given* by God. It is God who took the initiative and sustained the given unity by grace and mercy, despite sinfulness and its consequences, so that it is claimed that, ‘notwithstanding our divisions, we are one in Jesus Christ’.²⁹ The nature of unity as a gift as well as the shared desire to see the visible manifestation of that unity in the Church could be understood by looking into her identity as ‘God’s gift to men for the salvation of the world’.³⁰ It sheds light on the mutual significance between the unity and mission of the Church, a point which more militant conservatives such as J. Gresham Machen and Carl McIntire later rejected.³¹

Furthermore, the concern for visible unity cannot be separated from the calling to holiness, and the emphasis on the proclamation of the gospel, as is stated:

‘We believe that the Church has a vocation to worship God in His holiness, to proclaim the Gospel to every creature. She is equipped by God with the various gifts of the Spirit for the building up of the Body of Christ. She has been set apart

²⁷ *CTCV*, Historical Note.

²⁸ The practical rather than doctrinal approach of Life and Work to the unity as projected through the preparatory committee meeting at Helsingborg in 1922 was the distinct feature of the movement, and it was also displayed in Stockholm in 1925 (Nils Kalstrom, "Movements for International Friendship and Life and Work", 540.). ‘In Helsingborg, the Stockholm conference took form’ and it is also relatedly recounted that Nathan Söderblom ‘attempted to limit the issues that were to be considered’ and, in the end, ‘there was unity concerning six main themes: (1) the church’s general responsibility in light of God’s plan for the world; (2) the church and economic and industrial problems; (3) the church and social and moral problems; (4) the church and international relations; (5) the church and education; and, (6) different ways of strengthening cooperation between the churches and bringing them together on a federated base’ (Jonas Jonson, *Nathan Soderblom: Called to Serve* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2016), 344.). Despite that Life and Work clearly held fast to the priority of socio-ethical questions over dogmatic issues for Christian unity, it was rather inclination than total rebuttal by which its attitude could be elucidated (Nils Ehrenstrom, "Movements for International Friendship and Life and Work, 1925-1948", 547.). Furthermore, the humility under the Cross of Christ was emphasised over and over again as something alongside which the Christian unity could be demonstrated (Nils Ehrenstrom, "Movements for International Friendship and Life and Work", 1925-1948”, 548.). Also, the Orthodox’ participation in the Life and Work Conference at Stockholm denoted the genuinely ecumenical nature of the movement, which ‘made easier the whole-hearted self-committal of the Anglican and Old Catholic Communions to its development’. It is hereby made clear that the intention of Life and Work was posited in direction for the whole ecumenicity (Nils Ehrenstrom, "Movements for International Friendship and Life and Work", 548-549.). Moreover, the Conference proved to be an extraordinary achievement in the sense that not only political but also theological relation between participants that could, without much difficulty, be defined to be a deep rift or fissure was trounced by the ‘harmony and fellowship’ overwhelming the scene of the event (Nils Ehrenstrom, "Movements for International Friendship and Life and Work", 549-550.).

²⁹ World Council of Churches, *Man’s Disorder And God’s Design Vol. I: The Universal Church in God’s Design: An Ecumenical Study Prepared Under the Auspices of the WCC* (London: SCM, 1948), 204.

³⁰ World Council of Churches, *Man’s Disorder And God’s Design Vol. I: The Universal Church in God’s Design: An Ecumenical Study Prepared Under the Auspices of the WCC*, 206.

³¹ From early on, Machen did not find a ‘higher cause than the preservation of doctrinal purity’, whereas his colleague Erdman upheld the priority of ‘the cause of saving the world’ over ‘the purity of Presbyterian doctrine’. Erdman attended the Edinburgh Conference in 1910 (Brian Stanley, *Christianity in the Twentieth Century*, 31). McIntire’s counter-movement to the Amsterdam Assembly of World Council of Churches was substantiated in the inauguration of the International Council of Christian Churches (ICCC) in Amsterdam in 1948. McIntire’s group distinguished itself from the evangelicals who decided to stay in touch with their colleagues that remained ‘in the liberal-controlled churches for careers and other reasons’, as they took more separatist stance to preserve Presbyterian orthodoxy (J. Gordon Melton, "Fundamentalism", in *Encyclopedia of Protestantism*, ed. by J. Gordon Melton (New York: Facts On File, 2005), 245.).

in holiness to live for the service of all mankind, in faith and love, by the power of the crucified and risen Lord and according to His example'.³²

By taking this position, the Amsterdam assembly tried to resolve opposing views. For the same reason, Faith and Order used a comparative methodology. In this way they avoided a right-and-wrong matrix of theology. The document also avoids trying to reconcile every aspect of the faith from one denomination to another. It states 'the Christian faith and life as a self-consistent whole', whereas the diverse and incompatible aspects of differences in various traditions were explained to be formulated on account of emphases respectively given to them.³³ Any complacent stance to the unity overlooking real divergences is rejected. The unity, in contrast, should be achieved 'in truth and holiness'.³⁴ Nevertheless, the in-depth investigation of the meaning of holiness is not provided in the report, notwithstanding a brief sentence that depicts sin as originating from humanity's estrangement from Christ.³⁵

2.1.3. Toronto Statement (1950) and Comparative Ecclesiology at Lund (1952)

In 1950 the World Council of Churches published the Toronto Statement. The declaration intended to specify the ecclesial status of the Council and its relation to member churches. This issue had not been sufficiently clarified at the 1948 Amsterdam Assembly. The statement was the answer to the fear that its agenda was to become a new superchurch that would replace existing denominations.³⁶ The Toronto Statement clarifies that the Council is instrumental and functions as a medium through which the churches can meet and join in discussions over significant matters of agreement and disagreement, with the aim of fully growing in unity. Moreover, the Council claims neutrality in the sense that no particular theological tradition could dominate the Council's discussions. Finally, the Statement acknowledges that theological neutrality does not imply that the Council is neutral to truth claims or takes a position of complete relativity to truth claim. Rather, it seeks for the full truth accepted by all members.³⁷

Concerning ecclesiological elements, the statement exhibits a clear Christocentric focus. Communication, discussion, and dialogue are possible in fellowship even against the backdrop of the want of full mutual recognition of churches, inasmuch as the churches are in harmony with one another in the 'recognition that Christ is the Divine Head of the Body'.³⁸ This perspective is also connected with the understanding that 'the Church of Christ is more inclusive than their own Church body'.³⁹ The concept of *vestigia ecclesiae* is of relevance here, and the mutual acceptance of existence of *vestigia ecclesiae* is expected to lead to 'the recognition of the full truth and to unity based on the full truth'.⁴⁰ The statement construes that the *raison d'être* of the Church 'is to witness to Christ', necessitating the mutual consultation in order to seek for the way to 'a common witness before the world'.⁴¹ The notion of solidarity of churches with each other is highlighted, for the fact that this is the

³² World Council of Churches, *Man's Disorder And God's Design Vol. I*, 206-207.

³³ World Council of Churches, *Man's Disorder And God's Design Vol. I*, 204-205.

³⁴ World Council of Churches, *Man's Disorder And God's Design Vol. I*, 207-9.

³⁵ World Council of Churches, *Man's Disorder And God's Design Vol. I*, 208.

³⁶ W. A. Visser 't Hooft, *The Genesis and Formation of the WCC*, 70.

³⁷ World Council of Churches, "Toronto Statement", July 8-15 (1950), III, 3-5.

³⁸ World Council of Churches, "Toronto Statement", IV, 1.

³⁹ World Council of Churches, "Toronto Statement", IV, 3.

⁴⁰ World Council of Churches, "Toronto Statement", IV, 5.

⁴¹ World Council of Churches, "Toronto Statement", IV, 6.

underlining reality in Christ, not merely doctrinal or theoretical.⁴² In this way, the constant renewal as requested will be successfully managed along with the process of mutual learning.⁴³ What is lucidly noticeable here is the continuation of the presence of inclination towards searching for the unity of the Church in light of the pursuit of common mission in togetherness.

The third World Conference on Faith and Order at Lund in 1952 clarified another issue. Is a comparative approach of a variety of theological positions enough in order to grow together theologically to a more unified understanding of the Christian faith? The Lund Conference declared:

‘We have seen clearly that we can make no real advance in unity, if we only compare our several conceptions of the nature of the church and the traditions in which they are embodied’.⁴⁴

Even though the specific comparative method implemented at Lund was questioned and critiqued, the general picture has not been altered into something else. Ecclesial traditions have still retained their own distinctive understandings and convictions even within the context of endeavouring to arrive at a convergence on the Church. It is correct to state that the particular type of comparative ecclesiology in the early stage of ecumenical movement has not been further upheld; however, an expectation of finding a common tradition beneath diversity has emerged.⁴⁵

2.1.4. “All in Each Place” – The New Delhi Assembly (1961)

The second assembly of the WCC in Evanston (USA) in 1954 was not an occasion where a further clarification of the unity of the church was articulated, but the third assembly in New Delhi in India in 1961 was, as indicated in the historical note of *CTCV*. This is directly related to the contribution of new observers and participants. For instance, ‘a group of Roman Catholic observers’ was sent to the Third Assembly in New Delhi.⁴⁶ It was part of the programme of *aggiornamento* of pope John XXIII (1958-1963) calling on the Roman Catholic Church to open itself towards the world, other Christian denominations, and non-Christian religions. This changed attitude would also turn the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) of the Roman Catholic Church into a major ecumenical event. In addition, the fellowship of the Council was strengthened through the participation of the new Orthodox member Churches of Eastern Europe and the increase of the number of younger churches. At the same time, the Council’s horizons broadened as an aftermath of its integration with the International Missionary Council.⁴⁷

⁴² World Council of Churches, "Toronto Statement", IV, 7.

⁴³ World Council of Churches, "Toronto Statement", IV, 8.

⁴⁴ *A Documentary History of the Faith and Order Movement, 1927-1963*, ed. by Lukas Vischer (St. Louis, Mo.: Bethany Press, 1963), 85, cited by Martien E. Brinkman, *Progress in Unity?: Fifty Years of Theology within the World Council of Churches: 1945-1995: A Study Guide* (Leuven: Peeters Press, 1995), 10. Brinkman comments that ‘every attempt to pin down an ecclesiastical tradition on a number of specific characteristics ignores the dynamics and diversity typical of every living tradition (Martien E. Brinkman, *Progress in Unity?: Fifty Years of Theology within the World Council of Churches: 1945-1995: A Study Guide*, 10.)’.

⁴⁵ Dale T. Irvin, *Hearing Many Voices: Dialogue and Diversity in the Ecumenical Movement* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1994), 50-51.

⁴⁶ W. A. Visser ‘t Hooft, "General Ecumenical Development Since 1948", in *The Ecumenical Advance: A History of the Ecumenical Movement Vol. 2, 2nd Edition*, ed. by Harold E. Fey (Geneva: WCC, 1970), 16.

⁴⁷ H. Krüger, "The Life and Activities of the World Council of Churches", in *The Ecumenical Advance: A History of the Ecumenical Movement Vol. 2 1948-1968*, ed. by Harold E. Fey (London: S.P.C.K., 1970), 41-42. See also, Konrad Raiser, *Ecumenism in Transition: A Paradigm Shift in the Ecumenical Movement?* (Geneva: WCC, 1991), 46-47.

Against this background, what occurred was the gradual transformation of the Basis into the trinitarian formulations from New Haven in 1957, to Buenos Aires in 1960, and to St Andrews in 1960. The final version submitted to the New Delhi Assembly was:

‘The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God the Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit’.⁴⁸

This transition does not entail that the centrality of Christ has been decimated. In the document’s elucidation of the three most critical aspects of the Church that build up its unity, namely confession, sacrament and ministry, Jesus Christ comes to the centre. Even ‘the main theme’, as Krüger examines, ‘continued the christocentric line’: “Jesus Christ – the Light of the World”.⁴⁹ Baptism is the common baptism ‘into Jesus Christ’, and the confession that is paired up with the apostolic continuity of faith is christologically defined: confessing ‘him as Lord and Saviour’. The expression given to eucharist is ‘breaking the one bread’.⁵⁰

In accordance with the trinitarian form of the Basis, the description of the unity of the Church now presents a clear trinitarian framework. It proclaims in the first sentence:

‘The love of the Father and the Son in the unity of the Holy Spirit is the source and goal of the unity which the Triune God wills for all men and creation...we share in this unity in the Church of Jesus Christ...In him alone, given by the Father to be Head of the Body, the Church has its true unity. The reality of this unity was manifest at Pentecost in the gift of the Holy Spirit’.⁵¹

The locality of the church is given more prominence through the expression "*all in each place*":

‘In Amsterdam they “intended to stay together”; at Lund unity was sought by focussing on the common centre, Christ; in New Delhi they affirmed the oneness of “all in each place”...’⁵²

The unity of the church is adjacent to its catholicity since the Church belongs to Christ and through Him is tied to the churches and ‘Christians in all places and all ages’.⁵³ Above all, unity is dependent on the ‘presence and governance’ of the Spirit, and the concept "*koinonia*" simultaneously provides the basis for the understanding that the churches are committed to Christ and to each other. It is quite compatible with the picture of the *organicity* of the life and mutual relationship while opposite to the rigidity of ‘institution or organisation’.⁵⁴ Thus, the unity in the description by the New Delhi report is that of the Church which, within the framework of *koinonia* generated and maintained by the Spirit, is observed in each place in accordance with the recognition of baptism and ministry as well as the oneness of faith and

⁴⁸ H. Krüger, "The Life and Activities of the World Council of Churches", 34-5.

⁴⁹ H. Krüger, "The Life and Activities of the World Council of Churches", 41.

⁵⁰ World Council of Churches, "New Delhi Statement on Unity", 31 December 1961, 2.

⁵¹ World Council of Churches, "New Delhi Statement on Unity", 1.

⁵² Meredith B. Handspicker, "Faith and Order 1948-1968", in *The Ecumenical Advance: A History of the Ecumenical Movement Vol.2 1948-1968*, ed. by Harold E. Fey (London: S.P.C.K, 1970), 150. See also, World Council of Churches, "New Delhi Statement on Unity", 7.

⁵³ World Council of Churches, "New Delhi Statement on Unity", 17.

⁵⁴ World Council of Churches, "New Delhi Statement on Unity", 9-10. Miriam Haar, "The Struggle for an Organic, Conciliar and Diverse Church: Models of Church Unity in Earlier Stages of the Ecumenical Dialogue", in *Ecumenical Ecclesiology: Unity, Diversity and Otherness in a Fragmented World*, ed. by Gesa Elsbeth Thiessen (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 53-55.

the Lord's Table.⁵⁵ The separation of the Church finds its origin in sinful self-will and human ignorance.⁵⁶ The unity, therefore, is illustrated to be 'nothing less than a death and rebirth of many forms of Church life'.⁵⁷ As a result, the New Delhi Assembly spent a considerable amount of effort to reach convergence on baptism, eucharist and ministry, as these are intimately related to the visible unity of the Church 'in the apostolic faith, sacramental life, ministry, and mission'.⁵⁸ The main connection between unity and mission did not disappear. On the contrary, the Church was expected to 'act and speak together as occasion requires for the tasks to which God calls his people'.⁵⁹ The local focus with stress on catholicity and the intention of finding a genuine unity—or unity in truth—are highlighted in the New Delhi document on ecclesiology.

2.1.5. "Catholicity and the Holy Spirit" – The Uppsala Assembly (1968)

The period between the New Delhi Assembly in 1961 and the Uppsala in 1968 would be characterised as decisively transitional, followed by the expansion of the scope of the Council and more attention drawn to the Holy Spirit in its theological approach.⁶⁰ It was reckoned:

'...in these years the ecumenical movement ceased to be a movement of a part, however large, of the total Christian forces and became, to use an expression from the early days of ecumenism, a truly "panchristian" movement, so that all churches were obliged to define their attitude to it'.⁶¹

This rather newly introduced tendency came along with the Council's theological move from the christocentric approach to the pneumatological appeal. The Western-dominant character of the ethos of the Council thus far was challenged by the Eastern input, as a consequence of that 'by 1963 practically all churches of the Eastern Orthodox tradition had become member churches'.⁶² The Council's ameliorated interaction with the Roman Catholic Church began in 1960 when Pope John XXIII created 'the Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity'. During the time of the Second Vatican Council, the World Council of Churches was invited to send observers. The published document on ecumenism named 'De Ecumenismo' showed the Roman Catholics' own take on the ecumenical movement. The subsequent facilitation of

⁵⁵ Mutual recognition of baptism exercised in each tradition, apostolic faith, faithful and renewed preaching of the gospel, participation in one Lord's Table, common prayer, corporate mission and service, and mutually recognised ministry are designated as the elements of the visible unity, together with accompanying comments on the existing problems in each area for reaching agreements (World Council of Churches, "The New Delhi Statement on Unity", 8, 11-16.). The most painful reality of division is sharply realised in the impossibility of sharing the Holy Communion by all denominations. This is firstly because the joined Christians would come to feel agonizingly the sheer reality of division, even though they might have conceived the inherited as well as progress in search of the unity of the Church (World Council of Churches, "New Delhi Statement on Unity", 24.).

⁵⁶ World Council of Churches, "New Delhi Statement on Unity", 3.

⁵⁷ World Council of Churches, "New Delhi Statement on Unity", 3. Miriam Haar, "The Struggle for an Organic, Conciliar and Diverse Church: Models of Church Unity in Earlier Stages of the Ecumenical Dialogue", 53.).

⁵⁸ *CTCV*, Historical Note.

⁵⁹ World Council of Churches, "New Delhi Statement on Unity", 2. Relatedly, Visser 't Hooft recognises the Life and Work Commission's influence on the awakening of the churches towards the human needs in society. They no longer had 'a dominant voice', but still they could have substantial influence on their members' action as well as public opinion. Thus, as it happens, they broke out of 'a self-centred existence' and made an attempt to take action for society according to their needs (W. A. Visser 't Hooft, "The General Ecumenical Development since 1948", 11-12.).

⁶⁰ Cf. Konrad Raiser, *Ecumenism in Transition: A Paradigm Shift in the Ecumenical Movement?*, 73.

⁶¹ World Council of Churches, *New Delhi to Uppsala: 1961-1968: Report of the Central Committee to the 4th Assembly of the World Council of Churches* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1968), 7.

⁶² World Council of Churches, *New Delhi to Uppsala: 1961-1968: Report of the Central Committee to the 4th Assembly of the World Council of Churches*, 7.

the communication between these two groups in friendly terms generated the Roman Catholics' augmented influence on the Council's theologico-ethical consideration.⁶³

This change of context seems to be coupled with its increased concern for the world crisis of conflicts and wars to emanate a certain kind of transition towards the pan-Christian covering along with pneumatological emphasis on the basis of trinitarian grounding.⁶⁴ The seriousness of all the terrifying occasions in the globe provided an impetus to a "paradigm shift", as referred to later by Raiser, from a "christocentric universalism" to an inclusive trinitarian approach that is granted more of a global outlook with pneumatological emphasis.⁶⁵ The intensified racial tensions in South Africa, for example, after the tragic events in Sharpeville in 1960 caught the Council's attention. Tore Samuelson recounts that 1968 was 'a year when dramatic political crossroads and global demands for peace and justice set the course for both the world and the ecumenical voyage', naming 'the Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia, student revolts in Paris, a growing civil rights movement in the USA, Vietnam war protests, a building global anti-apartheid movement, liberation struggles in colonial states, an intensifying Cold War', and so forth.⁶⁶

Accordingly, the question as to the relevance of the basis and the form of the unity was raised leading up to the time of the Assembly in 1968, caused by these contemporary immediate crisis 'such as the struggle for racial equality'.⁶⁷ The Uppsala Report declares: 'We cannot be isolated from the shocks and turmoil of our time, as conflicts between races and nations tear apart the fabric of our common life, as developed and developing countries become more and more alienated from each other, and ideologies and crusades clash in deadly struggle for survival... We see the work of demonic forces... against the rights and liberties of man'.⁶⁸ Thus, Krüger maintains:

'The Churches' desire to stay together (Amsterdam) and to grow together (Evanston) had developed into joint progress in assuming new tasks (New Delhi). This tremendous task of ecumenical unity, renewal, and co-operation was re-examined at Uppsala in 1968 in the light of the promise of the Lord when he shall return, "Behold I make all things new!"'⁶⁹

The Holy Spirit is significant in the ecclesiological articulation of the Uppsala report in 1968. The report underscores that 'God is already at work to make all things new', and the Church is called to be His co-worker, and this outlook is clearly linked up with 'the activity of the life-giving Spirit of God'.⁷⁰ Along with the outward-looking stance, unity is understood alongside *catholicity*. The Uppsala report's view mirrors the previous report confirmed in New Delhi, and declares that the catholicity 'is a gift of the Spirit, but it is also a task, a call and an engagement'.⁷¹ This is because 'the activity of the Spirit never forces men, but opens before them the doors of God's love and gives them the power to cooperate in God's creative

⁶³ World Council of Churches, *New Delhi to Uppsala: 1961-1968*, 7-8, 12.

⁶⁴ Cf. World Council of Churches, "The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church", in World Council of Churches, *The Uppsala Report: Official Report of the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Uppsala July 4-20, 1968*, ed. by Norman Goodall (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1968), 3.

⁶⁵ Konrad Raiser, *Ecumenism in Transition: A Paradigm Shift in the Ecumenical Movement?*, 91. See also, Brian Stanley, *Christianity in the Twentieth Century*, 194-196.

⁶⁶ <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/behold-i-make-all-things-new-wccs-fourth-assembly-in-uppsala-4-20-july-1968> (Last accessed on the 2nd July 2020).

⁶⁷ "The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church", *The Uppsala Report*, 3.

⁶⁸ "The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church", *The Uppsala Report*, 4.

⁶⁹ H. Krüger, "The Life and Activities of the World Council of Churches", 44.

⁷⁰ "The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church", *The Uppsala Report*, 4.

⁷¹ "The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church", *The Uppsala Report*, 7.

and redeeming action'.⁷² What is more, catholicity here involves the temporal as well as spatial transcendence of the Church, whose credit belongs entirely to the Spirit.⁷³ Catholicity stands up against 'all kinds of egoism and particularism', and manifests 'one heart and one soul (Acts 4:32; Phil. 2:1-12)'.⁷⁴ Lodberg puts it:

'Catholicity is interpreted pneumatologically as a dynamic term, which is defined qualitatively from the task of the Church as a reconciling community in the world. The Church is sent to the world in the Holy Spirit'.⁷⁵

Diversity is stressed in line with catholicity as a fundamental facet of the Church and the document explains that 'diversity may be a perversion of catholicity but often it is a genuine expression of the apostolic vocation of the Church'.⁷⁶ Apostolicity projects mainly two dimensions. First, apostolicity signifies apostolic dynamicity and it is connected with catholicity. The apostolic dynamicity of the Church is understood in terms of its being called and sent out by the Lord, and it coincides with the catholicity of the Church.⁷⁷ It signifies a mutualistic character, which is marked by the Church's feature of 'being called out of the world and being sent into the world'.⁷⁸ The significant criterion for *genuine diversity* is the capacity to heighten catholicity by 'encouraging and advancing the double movement'.⁷⁹ The second feature of diversity is unravelled by the Church's preservation and renewal in association with the temporal transcendence of the Spirit through the passage of the time and transition of historical settings.⁸⁰ The report names it 'the twin demands' which conforms to the apostolicity 'derived from Christ through the apostles' as well as the response to the needs of the contemporary world.⁸¹ In other words, diversity in catholicity implicates the relation between dynamic apostolicity in being called and being sent and catholic apostolicity as transcending the temporal and spatial limitation by the Spirit.⁸² The unity in catholicity of the Church points towards the renewal and unity of humankind. The report offers a significant illumination:

'The unity of man is grounded for the Christian not only in his creation by the one God in his own image, but in Jesus Christ who for us men became man, was crucified, and who constitutes the Church which is his body as a new community of new creatures'.⁸³

Lastly, the report points out that all of the ecclesiological attributes "oneness, catholicity, holiness, and apostolicity" are illustrated as forming the relationship of interdependence.⁸⁴ Noticeably, the holiness is characterised by the Church's life 'for God and for others', but

⁷² "The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church", *The Uppsala Report*, 10.

⁷³ "The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church", *The Uppsala Report*, 6.

⁷⁴ "The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church", *The Uppsala Report*, 7.

⁷⁵ Peter Lodberg, 'The History of Ecumenical Work on Ecclesiology and Ethics', *The Ecumenical Review* 47 (2), (1995), 130.

⁷⁶ "The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church", *The Uppsala Report*, 12. See also, Konrad Raiser, *Ecumenism in Transition: A Paradigm Shift in the Ecumenical Movement?*, 74.

⁷⁷ "The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church", *The Uppsala Report*, 12.

⁷⁸ "The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church", *The Uppsala Report*, 12.

⁷⁹ "The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church", *The Uppsala Report*, 13.

⁸⁰ "The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church", *The Uppsala Report*, 15.

⁸¹ "The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church", *The Uppsala Report*, 16.

⁸² Cf. Miriam Haar, "The Struggle for an Organic, Conciliar and Diverse Church", 55-56.

⁸³ "The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church", *The Uppsala Report*, 21.

⁸⁴ "The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church", *The Uppsala Report*, 5.

does not necessarily qualify the moral, spiritual, and doctrinal features of holiness.⁸⁵ The outward looking feature forms a major discourse in the Uppsala report, and, particularly, when it comes to holiness, a detailed explication is not provided. Then, the question would now head to whether the nature and character of the interdependence of the four attributes are truly understood and articulated.

2.1.6. “Conciliar Fellowship” – The Nairobi Assembly (1975)

The Uppsala theme for taking social responsibility became visible at the next assembly in Nairobi (Kenya) in 1975. The assembly called for disarmament during the Cold War nuclear arms race,⁸⁶ the promulgation of concern for human rights violations such as economic injustices,⁸⁷ and the pronouncement of apprehension of ecological injustices.⁸⁸ Against this background, the assembly also continued the discussion on the unity of the church as documented in the section report on the conditions and demands of the unity of the church. *CTCV* mentions the post-Uppsala development of the concept of *conciliar fellowship*. The term “*oikoumene*” was more related to the horizon of catholicity, as it ‘refers to the whole inhabited earth, to the universal human community’. It impacted the discourse on the relationship between the unity of the Church and the renewal and unity of humankind.⁸⁹

The Nairobi report on unity ‘*What Unity Requires*’ incorporates the notion of *conciliar fellowship* after it was developed during the Faith and Order Commission meeting in Louvain in 1971.⁹⁰ *Conciliar fellowship* represents the idea that, due to the foundational significance of the Triune God for the Christian community, diversity within the Church can be spoken of ‘as

⁸⁵ “The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church”, *The Uppsala Report*, 5.

⁸⁶ Peter Weiderud, “The WCC Concern for Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation”, 12 March 2005. The link is at <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/commissions/international-affairs/peace-and-disarmament/nuclear-weapons/the-wcc-concern-for-nuclear-disarmament-and-non-proliferation> (Last accessed on the 25th August 2020). The subsequent council in Vancouver in 1983 made an appeal to the churches and Christians against participating ‘in research, production or use of nuclear arms (John. C. Bennet and Paul Arbrecht, “Cold War”, in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement, 2nd Edition*, ed. by Nicholas Lossky, José Míguez Bonino, John Pobee, Tom F. Stranksy, Geoffrey Wainwright and Pauline Webb (Geneva: WCC, 2002), 213-214.)’.

⁸⁷ Cf. Erich Weingärtner, “Human Rights”, in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement, 2nd Edition*, ed. by Nicholas Lossky, José Míguez Bonino, John Pobee, Tom F. Stranksy, Geoffrey Wainwright and Pauline Webb (Geneva: WCC, 2002), 550-551. See also, World Council of Churches, “70th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights”, 15-21 June 2018, 2. The link is at <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/central-committee/geneva-2018/70th-anniversary-of-the-universal-declaration-of-human-rights> (Last accessed on the 25th August 2020).

⁸⁸ World Council of Churches, “Statement on Eco-Justice and Ecological Debt”, 2 September 2009, 5. The link is at <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/central-committee/2009/report-on-public-issues/statement-on-eco-justice-and-ecological-debt> (Last accessed on the 25th August 2020).

⁸⁹ David Enderton Johnston, *Uppsala to Nairobi, 1968-1975: Report of the Central Committee to the Fifth Assembly of the World Council of Churches* (London: SPCK, 1975), 33.

⁹⁰ “What Unity Requires”, in *World Council of Churches, Breaking Barriers, Nairobi 1975: The Official Report of the Fifth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Nairobi, 23 November-10 December, 1975*, ed. by David M. Paton (London: WCC and SPCK, 1976), 3. The Louvain report solidifies the Uppsala report's utterance of the dynamic nature of catholic and apostolic nature of the church in view of the being and calling of the Church in trinitarian outlook. The Church is the Body of Christ, and thereby participates in the trinitarian communion. The Holy Spirit is its vivification, calling it to witness and achievement of the given and promised unity. Givenness and promise in relation to the unity of the Church refers to the catholic being and catholic calling of the Church in perspective of the eschatological finalisation (*Faith and Order: Study Reports and Documents [Since the Meeting of the Faith and Order Commission in Bristol (1967) and from the Meeting] Louvain [August] 1971*, ed. by Lukas Vischer (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1971), 136-137.). Also, Christ's calling is for everybody, regardless of his/her status, race, sex, et cetera. As to apostolicity, its spiritual character is given more substantiation than its traditional legality in exclusiveness (*Faith and Order: Study Reports and Documents [Since the Meeting of the Faith and Order Commission in Bristol (1967) and from the Meeting] Louvain [August] 1971*, 137.).

something to be not only admitted but actively desired'.⁹¹ *Conciliar fellowship* grounds itself in *catholicity in apostolicity*, in that while it encourages and even desires the diversity of local congregations according to the particularity of their cultural, psychological, political, sociological or historical settings, the apostolicity of faith is in no way to be compromised but preserved and proclaimed.⁹² The explicability in different contexts derives from the Scripture in whose light the churches could acquire the confession of Christ 'as God and Saviour'.⁹³ The confession of faith and the concomitant display of the churches' witness are coherently intertwined with an ecclesiological concept that incorporates the *catholicity in apostolicity* together with the *unity in diversity*.

According to the Nairobi report, *conciliar fellowship* 'expresses the unity of the Church separated by distance, culture, and time, a unity which is publicly manifested when the representatives of these local churches gather together for a common meeting'.⁹⁴ Here, it is important to pay attention to the visible unity that is expressed through the presence and meeting of the local churches. The unity of the church is made visible through the shared eucharistic celebration and through the safeguarding of the apostolic traditions by the churches.⁹⁵ The baptism and eucharist implicate the common confession of faith in Christ. They embody the personal as well as communal nature of the unity on a local level.⁹⁶ The concept of *conciliar fellowship* does not express a bureaucratic structure of the Church, but its organic nature grounded in the 'committed personal fellowship in Christ'.⁹⁷ It underlines the *personal nature* of the Christian community.⁹⁸ The vision of unity and mission is upheld in the document, and the essential significations of catholicity and apostolicity are granted due expressions in the explication of the notion of conciliar fellowship.

2.1.7. To Santiago de Compostela (1993) — Building Blocks for An Ecumenical Ecclesiology

CTCV refers to 'the Canberra statement on the unity of the Church' at the Canberra Assembly in 1991 that focussed on the central notion "*koinonia*". The Canberra statement is a brief text that makes known the progress in ecclesiology. It also identifies the remaining issues that needed attention. Its understanding of full communion is that 'all the churches are able to recognise in one another the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church in its fullness'.⁹⁹ Also, *koinonia* is indicated to be 'given and expressed in the common confession of the apostolic faith', 'a common sacramental life entered by the one baptism and celebrated together in one eucharistic fellowship', 'a common life in which members and ministries are mutually recognised and reconciled', 'and a common mission witnessing to all people to the gospel of God's grace and serving the whole of creation'.¹⁰⁰ In other words, the communion defined as

⁹¹ "What Unity Requires", in *World Council of Churches, Breaking Barriers, Nairobi 1975: The Official Report of the Fifth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Nairobi, 23 November-10 December, 1975*, 7.

⁹² "What Unity Requires", 5.

⁹³ "Confessing Christ Today", in *World Council of Churches, Breaking Barriers, Nairobi 1975: The Official Report of the Fifth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Nairobi, 23 November-10 December, 1975*, 24.

⁹⁴ "What Unity Requires", 4.

⁹⁵ "What Unity Requires", 4-5.

⁹⁶ "Confessing Christ Today", 32.

⁹⁷ Miriam Haar, "The Struggle for an Organic, Conciliar and Diverse Church", 58.

⁹⁸ "What Unity Requires", 10.

⁹⁹ World Council of Churches, "The Unity of the Church: Gift and Calling – The Canberra Statement", 20 February 1991, 2.1.

¹⁰⁰ World Council of Churches, "The Unity of the Church: Gift and Calling – The Canberra Statement", 2.1.

koinonia is manifested in the common faith, sacramental life, ministry and witness in the world. This notion would become a defining concept for the following ecclesiology project of Faith and Order discussed at the fifth Conference on Faith and Order at Santiago de Compostela in 1993.¹⁰¹

The conference endowed the ecumenical ecclesiology with a renewed stimulus after the continuous works done from the 1980s up to the point of the Conference. *Koinonia* is explored *via* various lenses of relevance to the advancement of its implementation for the rendering of an ecumenical deliberation, wrapping up in the biblical investigation and the accounts of other fundamental topics in an ecumenical view on ecclesiology. *Koinonia* was already introduced in the New Delhi report on unity, but it did not receive a thorough exploration as in Santiago de Compostela in 1993.¹⁰² The conference offered a rather extensive treatment of *koinonia* due to the acknowledgement of its increasing significance. *Koinonia* turned into a central concept, and the visible unity of the Church and its mission were the main themes to be illuminated. In this context, the essential elements for communion, namely the common faith, baptism, eucharist, and ministry were suggested to be utilised together with the work on ethics and ecclesiology.¹⁰³

And yet, before going into detail on the new ecclesiological project that would be decided at the Santiago de Compostela meeting of Faith and Order, it is relevant to mention major relevant societal and ecumenical developments. By 1993, the Cold War had ended with the implosion of communist governments in the Soviet Union and most of the allied countries by the end of the 1980s.¹⁰⁴ Consequently, the South African National Party that was in office realised that it could no longer point to the Cold War for justifying its apartheid system and released Nelson Mandela who was later elected the first president of a democratic South Africa in 1994.¹⁰⁵ The end of the Cold War brought about a temporary end to the arms race. Neo-liberalism became the dominant economic ideology forming new norm for a globalised world driven by market forces and technological developments. Last but not least, after 1975, the awareness continued to grow of the ecological challenge put forth by rapid globalization.¹⁰⁶

Many mainline churches and the ecumenical movement had developed a growing sensitivity for their societal calling since the 1960s. At its Vancouver assembly in 1983, the World Council of Churches launched the so-called conciliar process of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC).¹⁰⁷ It led to a project in the 1980s that combined the traditional

¹⁰¹ CTCV, Historical Note.

¹⁰² The New Delhi report imbued into the concept of *koinonia* a sense of fellowship, which pits itself against tendency towards institutionalism. The gist of commitment and participation was also forwarded, describing the portrayal of the life of community in Jesus Christ from sharing the same Gospel to joining 'one mission of Christ in the world' (World Council of Churches, "New Delhi Statement on Unity", 10.).

¹⁰³ Cf. Faith and Order, *Minutes of the Meeting of the Faith and Order Standing Commission 4-11 January 1994 Cret-Berard, Switzerland: Faith and Order Study No. 167* (Geneva: WCC, 1994), 28-29. See also, Faith and Order, *Faith and Order in Moshi: The 1996 Commission Meeting: Faith and Order Paper No. 177*, ed. by Alan Falconer (Geneva: WCC, 1998), 232-263.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. John. C. Bennet and Paul Arbrecht, "Cold War", 214.

¹⁰⁵ Charles Villa-Vicencio, "Apartheid", in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement, 2nd Edition*, ed. by Nicholas Lossky, José Míguez Bonino, John Pobee, Tom F. Stranksy, Geoffrey Wainwright and Pauline Webb (Geneva: WCC, 2002), 44.

¹⁰⁶ World Council of Churches, "Statement on Eco-Justice and Ecological Debt", 2 September 2009, 5.

¹⁰⁷ It metamorphosed 'the Christian involvement in world affairs' from the matter of Christian ethics to more of 'confessing the faith', since it is 'confessing Christ as the life of the world' just as the Vancouver Assembly pronounced (D. Preman Niles, "Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation", in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement, 2nd Edition*, ed. by Nicholas Lossky, José Míguez Bonino, John Pobee, Tom F. Stranksy, Geoffrey Wainwright and Pauline Webb (Geneva: WCC, 2002), 631. See also, World Council of Churches, *Gathered for Life: Official Report: VI Assembly World Council of Churches, Vancouver, Canada, 24 July-10 August 1983*, ed. by David M. Gill (Geneva: WCC, 1983), 255, cited by D. Preman Niles, 'How Ecumenical Must the Ecumenical

focus on the unity of the Church in view of better fulfilling its missional calling with its broadened vision for the unity of humankind. This study process would result in the publications *Church and World: The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community* in 1992.¹⁰⁸ It dealt with the problem of the enduring cleft between the *visible unity* of the Church and *ethics*. Its undergirding viewpoint was that those two are not only inseverable, but also to be understood as ‘two sides of the same coin’.¹⁰⁹ *Koinonia* should not be conceived without *diakonia* ‘to the whole world’. The sheer feasibility of *koinonia* lies in the incorporation of *diakonia*.¹¹⁰ In this vein, the document finds an ontological definition of the Church in relation to ethics. Given that the Church is constantly encountered, challenged, and formed by *anamnesis* (‘the memory of Jesus Christ’), the Church is to be called ‘a *koinonia* ethic’, rather than ‘has a social ethic’.¹¹¹ It does not establish the notion that moral activities constitute the Church, but that moral failures, in relation to ‘the threats to life’ identified under the theme Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation, not only significantly mar the credibility of the witness of the Church itself, but also compromise ‘the holiness of the Church’, which is ‘the constant moral struggle of its members’.¹¹² The very concept of *koinonia* addresses the community in which, ‘along with the confession of faith and the celebration of the sacraments, and as an inseparable part of it, the gospel tradition is probed permanently for moral inspiration and insight, and where incessant moral counsel keeps the issues of humanity and world alive in the light of the gospel’.¹¹³ *Koinonia*, among other biblical ideas and images, primarily denotes ‘the interaction or sharing of believers within the local Christian community’, and it was carefully extended to signify the common participation of believers in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the relations among churches in different regions, and thereby a community that transcends all the barriers ‘on the

Movement Be?: The Challenge of JPIC to the Ecumenical Movement’, *Ecumenical Review* 43/4 (1991), 451-452.).

¹⁰⁸ Faith and Order, *Church and World: The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community: A Faith and Order Study Document: Faith and Order Paper No. 151* (Geneva: WCC, 1992), 4, 8.). Several biblical and theological concepts that have so far been studied and referred to in the studies of ecclesiology are summoned and articulated upon, shedding light on their implications not only for the visible unity of the Church, but also for the renewal of human community (Cf. Faith and Order, *Church and World: The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community*, 6-7.). A significant observation of this work would be that its account for the renewal of human community does not cover exclusively the socio-ethical issues encountered in the contemporary context, but also suggests the significance of the Church’s being as an evangelical community (Faith and Order, *Church and World*, 24.). Its explication embraces both proton and eschaton regarding the purpose of God, in view of the person and work of Christ, towards the Church and humanity that is to be fulfilled in the Kingdom. This document deploys a wide range of materials from Christian classics to modern ecumenical statements as a source of additional explanation. To see the list of quotations, one should take a look at Faith and Order, *Church and World*, 80-85 (Appendix I).

¹⁰⁹ *Ecclesiology and Ethics: Ecumenical Ethical Engagement, Moral Formation and the Nature of the Church*, ed. by Thomas F. Best and Martin Robra (Geneva: WCC, 1997), ix-x, 2.

¹¹⁰ Melanie May, “The Unity We Share, the Unity We Seek”, in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement Vol. 3: 1968-2000*, ed. by John Briggs, Mercy Amba Oduyoye and Georges Tsentsis (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2004), 98.

¹¹¹ *Ecclesiology and Ethics: Ecumenical Ethical Engagement, Moral Formation and the Nature of the Church*, 4-5. May suggests that the term *koinonia* entails a strong sense of togetherness in communion as it portrays the image of Trinity, thereby bridling the conflict between the unity and the Church ethics due to the divisive character of ethics, politics and ideologies. *Koinonia* gets across the understanding of the community in which the formative process of moral decisions would be held in continuation along with the inspiration and insight from Christ and the understanding of the Church as a communion in Trinity (Melanie May, “The Unity We Share, the Unity We Seek”, 98-99.).

¹¹² *Ecclesiology and Ethics*, 5. The sacraments, in this context, came to be of significance, forasmuch as they appertain to the dynamics of person-shaping and sacramental living. Baptism and eucharist are invited to play a role, and the former entails the enactment of the value of the gospel in the baptised whereas the latter the striving for the healings of ‘the brokenness of human being and community’ through the realised communion (*Ecclesiology and Ethics*, 6-7.).

¹¹³ *Ecclesiology and Ethics*, 9.

basis of the gospel'.¹¹⁴ The document suggests the extension of *koinonia* to signify 'a common vision for a newly just, peaceful and responsible world' despite the imperfection of today, resonating with the notion of *oikoumene*.¹¹⁵

Since 'the common confession of the apostolic faith' was one of the three 'essential conditions and elements of visible unity', Faith and Order's project on searching 'the common expression of the apostolic faith' in the contemporary context was initiated in 1978 at Bangalore, developed and revised in the 1980s, and published with the title *Confessing the One Faith* in 1991.¹¹⁶ In this document, the Nicene-Constantinople Creed is employed as 'the theological and methodological tool' for identifying 'the fundamentals of the apostolic faith'. The reason for this decision is the prominence of this creed in terms of the extent of its universal reception as 'a normative expression of the essential content of the apostolic faith', its being 'part of the historical heritage of contemporary Christianity', and its usage within the liturgy in the history of Christianity for the purpose of expressing 'the one faith of the Church'.¹¹⁷ The document's methodological approach is determined by the major concerns that it faces: the questionability of relevance of 'the language and philosophy of the age in which the creeds were formulated' to the contemporary context, the increased appreciation of 'the influence of old and new religions', and the sense of scepticism towards 'many of the basic affirmations of the Christian faith'.¹¹⁸ It has a threefold structure for explication, which starts with the 'historical and biblical interpretations' of each tenet of the creed, continues with the contextualised application for the current context, and ends with the commentaries on 'additional historical background information or theological details or continuing controversial themes'.¹¹⁹

As for the unity and holiness of the Church, the document on the apostolic faith originates from the oneness of the Trinity and the holiness of God who sanctifies the Church in Christ through the Spirit. The document notes that the calling of unity is connected with the gift of unity. The study's discussion on holiness does not ostensibly comment on the calling of holiness but almost exclusively emphasises God's faithfulness for the justification and sanctification of the Church through 'the word and sacrament' despite the existence of sin and imperfection in its life.¹²⁰ How such imperfection and sin are manifested and thereby how holiness relates to them are not clearly indicated. Here, the unity is not identified as uniformity but includes the diversity of local churches in 'an organic bond of unity'.¹²¹ This diversity is observed through the lens of local churches, which is duly expressed in terms of catholicity. Catholicity, at this point, not only signifies the richness of the diversity of the Church in every time and space, but also insinuates the acceptance of local contextual elements and situations 'for the worship and the service of God'. This diversity also involves different traditions, Christian spiritualities, and, at the same time, the central significance of Christ and the Spirit's presence for the presence of the Church is mentioned.¹²² The oneness of faith, baptism, and the sharing of mission are underscored, and the full actualising of visible

¹¹⁴ *Ecclesiology and Ethics*, 10.

¹¹⁵ *Ecclesiology and Ethics*, 10.

¹¹⁶ Faith and Order, *Confessing the One Faith: An Ecumenical Explication of the Apostolic faith as it is Confessed in the Nicene-Constantinople Creed (381): Faith and Order Paper No. 153* (Geneva: WCC, Revised Edition, 2010), xix-xxi, xxvi.

¹¹⁷ Faith and Order, *Confessing the One Faith: An Ecumenical Explication of the Apostolic faith as it is Confessed in the Nicene-Constantinople Creed (381)*, xx-xxiii.

¹¹⁸ Faith and Order, *Confessing the One Faith*, xxvii.

¹¹⁹ Faith and Order, *Confessing the One Faith*, xxvii.

¹²⁰ Faith and Order, *Confessing the One Faith*, 76-77.

¹²¹ Faith and Order, *Confessing the One Faith*, 76-77.

¹²² Faith and Order, *Confessing the One Faith*, 76-77.

unity is explicated to occur only in 'one eucharistic communion'.¹²³ While the unity of the Church can be associated with catholicity and apostolicity, it seems unlikely that a direct link between unity and holiness in this material can be located.

Another and more direct incentive for the new project on the theology of the church would come in the aftermath of the 1982 Faith and Order publication – *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (BEM).¹²⁴ This famous document described the growing theological convergence on these three structural elements of ecclesial life—baptism, eucharist, and ministry—as expression of 'the faith of the Church through the ages'.¹²⁵ The text explains the common agreement (consensus), the progress on the way to agreement (convergence), and the points and extent of continuing differences (dissent). Faith and Order asked the churches whether they recognised the faith of the Church through the ages in this threefold theological statement.

Faith and Order received and assessed 186 reactions to *BEM* the following years. The process of retrieving and assessing the 186 reactions to *BEM* came up with the conclusion that 'several major ecclesiological themes' necessitate further investigation: 'the role of the Church in God's saving purpose; *koinonia*, the Church as a gift of the word of God (*creatura verbi*); the Church as mystery or sacrament of God's love for the world; the Church as the pilgrim people of God; and the Church as prophetic sign and servant of God's coming kingdom'.¹²⁶ Gassmann suggested in the background paper for the plenary discussion on ecclesiology held at the Faith and Order Commission Meeting at Budapest in 1989 that the work on ecclesiology in ecumenical perspective concerning the nature and mission of the Church is called for, as a reflection that basic ecclesiological presuppositional divergences functioned as considerable factors for disagreements among churches on the major issues, such as baptism, eucharist and ministry.¹²⁷ The 1990 report on the responses to *BEM* points out:

'Such an ecclesiology in an ecumenical perspective must take into account the various ideas of the church which reflect the churches' different self-understanding and their views on the nature of the church and its unity. It also requires the search for basic ecclesiological principles which could provide common perspectives for the churches' different ecclesiologies and serve as a framework for their convergence'.¹²⁸

The project was evidence of crucial progress in that, in spite of the predominant issues in ecclesiology within Faith and Order from the beginning, this ecclesiology project now began to cover all the individual elements related to the Church and strive to render an ecumenical ecclesiological reflection.¹²⁹ The 1989 plenary discussion confirms the need for

¹²³ Faith and Order, *Confessing the One Faith*, 76.

¹²⁴ Faith and Order, *Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry: Faith and Order Paper No. 111* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1982).

¹²⁵ Faith and Order, *Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry: Faith and Order Paper No. 111*, viii.

¹²⁶ CTCV, *Historical Note*.

¹²⁷ Günther Gassmann, "The Nature and Mission of the Church: Ecumenical Perspectives on Ecclesiology", in *Faith and Order 1985-1989: The Commission Meeting at Budapest 1989*, ed. by Thomas F. Best (Geneva: WCC, 1990), 202-203.) Gassmann makes note of the retrieved responses to the convergence paper *BEM* as well as the programme on Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) as examples that unveil the want of clarity of as well as harmonised perspectives on ecclesiology in terms of presuppositions and framework (Günther Gassmann, "The Nature and Mission of the Church: Ecumenical Perspectives on Ecclesiology", 202-203.).

¹²⁸ Faith and Order, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry 1982-1990: Report on the Process and Responses: Faith and Order paper no. 149* (Geneva: WCC, 1990), 148, cited by Neville Callam, "The Church as Koinonia: An Ecclesiology Study", in *Faith and Order in Moshi: The 1996 Commission Meeting*, ed. by Alan Falconer (Geneva: WCC, 1998), 97.

¹²⁹ Günther Gassmann, "The Nature and Mission of the Church ", 203.

ecclesiological study. Furthermore, its methodology should incorporate previous studies on the common faith, ecclesiology and ethics, desired unity, and baptism, eucharist and ministry.¹³⁰ It also suggests to make use of 'bilateral and other ecumenical discussions'.¹³¹ Its methodology is to appropriate 'both convergence and contextual ways of exploring ecclesiological data and issues', taking into account the diversity of ecclesiological expressions 'in the New Testament' and 'in subsequent history'.¹³² Its aim is not to provide a 'comprehensive ecclesiological statement' but 'concentrate on basic perspectives of unity and diversity and derive from these perspectives its themes and methodology'.¹³³ This collective decision on studies in ecumenical reflection on ecclesiology 'was endorsed at the plenary commission which convened at the end of the Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order, held at Santiago de Compostela' in 1993.¹³⁴

The vision for the visible unity of the Church in the Lausanne Conference in 1927 has led to a series of maturation in ecumenical ecclesiology up to the point of the Fifth Faith and Order Conference at Santiago de Compostela in 1993. During the process, an ideal for a convergence ecclesiology was expressed, an appeal to more of pneumatological approach to ecclesiology was implemented, a way of involving the missional and ethical calling of the church in the discussion of unity was continuously discovered and developed, and critical elements for visible unity such as baptism, eucharist and ministry and the common confession of faith were discussed. *Koinonia* turned out to be a significant concept for an ecumenical ecclesiology at Santiago de Compostela.

2.2. The Convergence Ecclesiology: *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* (2013)

2.2.1. Drafts for the Convergence Ecclesiology — *The Nature and Purpose of the Church* (1998) & *The Nature and Mission of the Church* (2005)

As aforementioned, the plenary discussion at Santiago de Compostela reaffirmed the Canberra statement on visible unity, stating that the portrayal of the visible unity of the Church 'needs be drawn out and developed'.¹³⁵ It did not intend to set out a convergence document, but 'prove to be a useful tool in stimulating and orientating conversation and also a potential quarry for the work of the sections and groups at the World Conference' and 'also

¹³⁰ "Group Discussion, Plenary Discussion and Plenary Action", in *Faith and Order 1985-1989: The Commission Meeting at Budapest 1989*, ed. by Thomas F. Best, (Geneva: WCC, 1990), 202-203. In this sense, this project is not about producing a new study, but 'a study which should bring together what has already been done in Faith and Order and beyond (Faith and Order, *Minutes of the Meeting of the Standing Commission 1990 Dunblane, Scotland: Faith and Order Paper No. 152* (Geneva, WCC, 1990), 68.)'.

¹³¹ "Group Discussion, Plenary Discussion and Plenary Action", 216.

¹³² "Group Discussion, Plenary Discussion and Plenary Action", 218. Comparative method would not be used, as the report intimates ("Group Discussion, Plenary Discussion and Plenary Action", 218.).

¹³³ "Group Discussion, Plenary Discussion and Plenary Action", 216. This point was reaffirmed in the standing commission meeting in Dunblane in 1990, as its report maintains: 'The purpose of the study is not to develop a detailed ecclesiological treatise or even an ecumenical ecclesiology. Rather, its aim is to bring together basic ecclesiological perspectives which have emerged in ecumenical dialogues...and which could lead to a convergent vision on the nature, unity and mission of the church...Can the separate ecclesiologies be transformed in such a way that the remaining differences become complementary rather than being mutually exclusive' (Faith and Order, *Minutes of the Standing Commission, Dunblane, Scotland: Faith and Order Paper no. 152* (Geneva: WCC/Faith and Order, 1990), 26-37, cited by Neville Callam, "The Church as Koinonia: An Ecclesiology Study", 98.)?

¹³⁴ Neville Callam, "The Church as Koinonia: An Ecclesiology Study", 98.

¹³⁵ Faith and Order, *Towards Koinonia in Faith, Life and Witness: A Discussion Paper: Faith and Order No. 161* (Geneva: WCC, 1993), 13.

serve as an impetus and resource for continuing ecumenical reflection and efforts within the churches'.¹³⁶ Moreover, the concept of *koinonia* was much more extensively discussed for comprehensive reasoning together with the previous Faith and Order works.¹³⁷ As a result, the very theme for discussion at Santiago de Compostela in 1993 turned out to be the concept of *koinonia*.¹³⁸

It is reported that, after 'the one-day meeting of the plenary commission immediately following' the conference in 1993, 'the standing commission meeting in Crêt-Bérard in January 1994 formulated its major study programme' with the name '*The Church as Koinonia: An Ecumenical Study*'.¹³⁹ The subsequent meetings at Dublin and Barbados in 1994 designed an overall outlook on 'what would become a convergence text on ecclesiology' in which the concept of *koinonia* played a central role.¹⁴⁰ An exploratory document was produced in 1995 at Anney, and further study was planned in 1996 which expressed that the study could neither ignore nor merely copy the Canberra statement; rather, it needs to assist the churches in understanding and implementing Canberra's insights on a deeper level.¹⁴¹ The emphasis on *koinonia* was interlinked with the perspective that the subject of the dividedness and reconciliation of churches is not isolated, but interconnected to that of the dividedness and reconciliation of humanity and aftermaths thereof.¹⁴²

The Harare assembly in 1998 reported on the draft work by Faith and Order on ecclesiology *The Nature and Purpose of the Church* (NPC).¹⁴³ NPC was published in 1998 as a subsequent endeavour through the study and dialogue process by the Commission on Faith and Order, signposting the path towards maturation of the convergence ecclesiology. As to the structure of argument, NPC consists of the five main sections on the nature and purpose of the Church. The first one is "The Church of the Triune God" which deals with the nature and purpose of the Church in general terms. The second part is "The Church in History" which wrestles with the issue of the tense relationship between the Church and sin or "already" and "not yet". The third chapter "The Church as *Koinonia*" sheds light on the meaning and significance of *koinonia* as it relates to the special relationships between unity and diversity as well as the locality and universality of the Church. The fourth section "Life in Communion" delves into the elements essentially required for the materialisation of communion: apostolic faith, baptism, eucharist, and common ministry. The last part "Service in and for the World" finalises the discussion by forwarding the calling and vision of the Church intended by the Triune God. Points of divergence are explained in boxes, which are located in relevant sections.

The main characteristic of NPC's explication of the nature of the Church is its absolute dependence on the Triune God in terms of its origin and sustenance, as expressed in the

¹³⁶ Faith and Order, *Towards Koinonia in Faith, Life and Witness: A Discussion Paper: Faith and Order No. 161*, 6.

¹³⁷ Faith and Order, *Towards Koinonia in Faith, Life and Witness: A Discussion Paper: Faith and Order No. 161*, 6.

¹³⁸ CTCV, Historical Note. Mary Tanner also paid heed to the fruitfulness of the fifth World Conference (Mary Tanner, "The Tasks of the World Conference in the Perspective of the Future", in *On the Way to Fuller Koinonia: Faith and Order Paper no. 166*, ed. by Günther Gassmann (Geneva: WCC, 1994.), 20-27.).

¹³⁹ "Appendix I: The Work on Ecclesiology", in *Faith and Order in Moshi: The 1996 Commission Meeting: Faith and Order Paper No. 177*, ed. by Alan Falconer (Geneva: WCC, 1998), 232.

¹⁴⁰ "Appendix I: The Work on Ecclesiology", in *Faith and Order in Moshi: The 1996 Commission Meeting: Faith and Order Paper No. 177*, 232-233.

¹⁴¹ "Appendix I: The Work on Ecclesiology", 233.

¹⁴² "Appendix I: The Work on Ecclesiology", 233.

¹⁴³ Aram I, "The Work of the WCC: Past, Present and Future – Report of the Moderator", in World Council of Churches, *Together on the Way: Official Report of the Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches*, ed. by Diane Kessler (Geneva: WCC, 1999), 45-46.

concept "*creatura Verbi et Spiritus*": 'the Church belongs to God'.¹⁴⁴ Accordingly, the four attributes in this part of *NPC* create the impression that they are the essential attributes of the Church duly characterised as given and absolute rather than conditional. More specifically, God's oneness generates the Church's oneness, and God's holiness the Church's holiness. Here, God's oneness signifies His being 'one creator and redeemer', whereas God's holiness signifies God's holy nature with which 'in Jesus Christ' He 'has overcome all unholiness. In consequence, He sanctifies the Church by his word of forgiveness in the Holy Spirit and makes it his own, the body of Christ'.¹⁴⁵ God's being 'the fullness of life' brings about the Church's catholic nature, since through the Word and the Spirit, God 'makes the Church the place and instrument of his saving, life-giving, fulfilling presence wherever it is. Thereby God through the Church offers the fullness of the revealed Word and all the means of salvation to people of every nation, race, class, sex and culture'.¹⁴⁶ The Church is apostolic as 'the Word of God that creates and sustains the Church is the Gospel primarily and normatively borne witness to by the apostles'.¹⁴⁷

As an overarching concept, *koinonia* has a significant position in *NPC* together with the notion of communion—'the communion of the faithful'—that echoes the personal nature of the vertical and horizontal relationship with God and others.¹⁴⁸ It is noted that *koinonia* as a terminology was used 'in the New Testament, patristic and Reformation writings in relation to the Church'.¹⁴⁹ *Koinonia* determines the original and intended nature of communion created by God between Himself and 'humanity and the whole of creation', which 'is a fundamental theme of Holy Scripture', as *NPC* alleges.¹⁵⁰ Sin is notified as the force that distorted it, damaging 'the relationship between God and humanity, between human beings with one another, and between humanity and the created order'.¹⁵¹ God's persistence in enriching and resuscitating *koinonia* meets its finalisation 'in the perfect communion of a new heaven and a new earth (Rev. 21)'.¹⁵² *Koinonia* has basic verbal forms: "to have something in common", "to share", "to participate", "to have part in", "to act together" or "to be in a contractual relationship involving obligations of mutual accountability".¹⁵³ Christians, 'through identification with the death and resurrection of Christ', are drawn into *koinonia* 'with God and one another in the life and love of God', by the power of the Holy Spirit.¹⁵⁴ *Koinonia* is a gift of God for humanity, and 'the Good News' is about this communion God intends for all.¹⁵⁵ Christians participate in Christ through 'faith and baptism', and this relationship of *koinonia* defines the nature and mission of the Church.¹⁵⁶ God's will is that

¹⁴⁴ Faith and Order, *The Nature and Purpose of the Church: A Stage on the Way to A Common Statement: Faith and Order Paper No. 181* (Geneva: WCC/Faith and Order, 1998), 9.

¹⁴⁵ Faith and Order, *The Nature and Purpose of the Church: A Stage on the Way to A Common Statement: Faith and Order Paper No. 181* [*NPC* onwards], 12.

¹⁴⁶ *NPC*, 12.

¹⁴⁷ *NPC*, 12.

¹⁴⁸ *NPC*, 10.

¹⁴⁹ *NPC*, 48.

¹⁵⁰ *NPC*, 49.

¹⁵¹ *NPC*, 50.

¹⁵² *NPC*, 50.

¹⁵³ *NPC*, 52.

¹⁵⁴ *NPC*, 53. The quoted verse in Scripture is 1 Jn. 1:3.

¹⁵⁵ *NPC*, 54.

¹⁵⁶ *NPC*, 55-56. *NPC* discusses the elements for *koinonia* at the same time, which consist of the common apostolic faith, baptism, eucharist, and ministry. *NPC* discloses the persisting and critical differences concerning those elements for communion, e.g. the belief in the physical resurrection of Jesus and in the sole mediatorship of Christ, the authorship of the Scripture, the way of 'the procession of the Holy Spirit (*NPC*, 10-11.)', the relationship

‘the whole creation, not only the Church but all, should realise communion in Christ (Eph. 1:10, 4:1-16)’.¹⁵⁷ The goal of mission is ‘the *koinonia* of all’.¹⁵⁸ This eschatological vision sustains even in spite of the persistent force of sin for which ‘the new life of communion...never wholly replaces communion given in creation, and it never within history completely overcomes the distortions of the relationship between human beings’.¹⁵⁹ The Church, therefore, needs continuous repentance and renewal, and ‘it belongs to the essence of fellowship with God’.¹⁶⁰

In this framework, *NPC* elucidates the essential relatedness of the Church’s holiness to God’s holiness by commenting that ‘it is holy because God is the holy one who in Jesus Christ has overcome all unholiness, sanctifying the Church by his word of forgiveness in the Holy Spirit and making it his own, the body of Christ’.¹⁶¹ *NPC* draws on Christ’s sanctifying work through the Holy Spirit on the foundation of ‘his word of forgiveness’, whereas the redemption of sins on the cross is not given prominent position in its textual deliberation. The statement also takes note of the Church’s being ‘an eschatological reality’ as well as ‘a historical reality’, indicating that it is ‘exposed to the ambiguity of all human history and thus not yet the community God desires’.¹⁶² It can be categorised into *gift-and-calling* paradigm, albeit it is silent about why particularly the word “ambiguity” is employed for the description of human history and whether the thorough influence of sin has its place in that reality. The human dimension of the Church is portrayed in terms of its living in the conditions of “change”, “individual, cultural and historical conditioning”, and “the power of sin”.¹⁶³ The major description of holiness and sin in *NPC* is that, while holiness is considered the essential attribute of the Church generated from the nature of God, sin is the force that has contradicted the Church’s holiness, ‘disfigured its witness and run counter to its true nature and vocation’.¹⁶⁴ Sin is also illustrated in the sense of damaging ‘the relationship between God and humanity, between human beings with each other, and between humanity and the created order’.¹⁶⁵ Therefore, the Church has been constantly given ‘God’s ever new offer of forgiveness together with the call for repentance, renewal and reform’.¹⁶⁶ In other words, within the paradigm of *gift and calling*, the Church is already holy due to the given nature of its holiness, while at the same time, it is called to be holy by overcoming the force of sin in its life and mission.

At the same time, it needs be indicated that *NPC* does not reckon the aspect of “already” and that of “not yet” as equals, but places the former as the innate framework in which the latter exists and works. The Church’s oneness, as shown forth beforehand, is a given in contradistinction from the existing divisions of the churches. The conditions of the world that, as to the oneness, has to do with the historical circumstances, and the power of sin are pointed

between baptism and faith, infant baptism, ‘the mode of baptism (*NPC*, 77-Box.)’, the scope of recipients for eucharist, the understanding of the essential nature of eucharist, the mode of the presence of Christ’s sacrifice (*NPC*, 80-Box.), and the necessity of the conciliar life along with the primacy in a global scale as well as the exact function of the primacy in conciliar context (*NPC*, 110-Box.).

¹⁵⁷ *NPC*, 57.

¹⁵⁸ *NPC*, 58.

¹⁵⁹ *NPC*, 60.

¹⁶⁰ *NPC*, 60.

¹⁶¹ *NPC*, 12.

¹⁶² *NPC*, 35.

¹⁶³ *NPC*, 37.

¹⁶⁴ *NPC*, 39.

¹⁶⁵ *NPC*, 50.

¹⁶⁶ *NPC*, 39.

out as the main causes for divisions. The Church is called for materialising the given unity of the Church in its full visibility.¹⁶⁷ The holiness of the Church is also essential and unshaken, but ‘sin, individual as well as communal’ has defaced ‘its witness and run counter to its true nature and vocation’. God offers His ever-new forgiveness to the Church through ‘repentance, renewal and reform’.¹⁶⁸ The connection not only between the division of the Church and sin, but also between the disfigurement of the mission of the Church and sin, are visible here, and sin is expressed in terms of individuality as well as communality.

Later on, the World Council of Churches documented responses from the churches and related groups to *NPC* on their website. They were presented at the Central Committee meeting, three years before the publication of *The Nature and Mission of the Church* (*NMC*) in 2005, and it does not offer an extensive account, but only a brief report of the reflections the responders respectively made.¹⁶⁹ The subsequent document—*NMC*—took up the ecclesiological themes brought up in *NPC* and presented a slightly modified ecclesiological disquisition with the altered title and structure of argument. Nonetheless, *NMC* looked to be quite similar to *NPC* without any fundamental transformation in terms of the contents of argument. Only minor alterations were applied.

In *NMC*, overall, compared to the *mission* of the Church, the *nature* of the Church receives more substantial argumentation, seeing that it draws on various ecclesiological themes and endeavours to make a more holistic presentation of the Church from different angles. And yet, one of the most noticeable aspects about *NMC* in comparison to *NPC* is that it attempts to give more attention to the missional and contextual dimension of the Church. In fact, one of the distinct points of critique on *NPC* was about the abstract feature of ecclesiological discourse of the document. More concreteness of account was requested.¹⁷⁰ Diversity according to the contextual differences hinders any absolutising attempt in ecclesiological construction, but roots for mutual learning.¹⁷¹ At any rate, diversity does not connote relativism, but what *NMC* is shown as striving to do is to present the common standpoints in ecclesiology while acknowledging the contextual diversity and the varied fruits out of it. *NMC*, in the introduction, portrays diverse contexts in terms of the preponderant needs. Missional contextualisation applies these different needs to each ecclesiological development, in which dissimilar contextual issues are underlined and dealt with.¹⁷² In short, *NMC* tries to indicate the common points of view in ecclesiology as well as to be sensitive about the contextual variation of the ecclesial life in its discussion.

Overall, *NMC* fleshes out the biblical ecclesiological notions in accordance with the Triune God—“the People of God”, “the Body of Christ”, and “the Temple of the Holy Spirit”—

¹⁶⁷ *NPC*, 38.

¹⁶⁸ *NPC*, 39.

¹⁶⁹ Alan Falconer, ‘The Church – God’s Gift to the World’, *International Review of Mission* 90 (2001), 397.

¹⁷⁰ For instance, the use of language was pointed out in a sense that the adopted linguistic method in *NPC* does not evince the “lived experience” (the United Reformed Church) of churches and not ‘take contextuality seriously’ (the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand). Other groups who were in line with these two are the National Council of Churches in Australia, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto, the American Baptist Church, and Bavarian pastors (World Council of Churches, “The Nature and Purpose of the Church: Response of the Member Churches to *The Nature and Purpose of the Church* (Faith and Order Paper No. 181)”, 2 September 2002.). Moreover, the concern for contextuality, along with the power of sin, also has a reference to the human reality of the Church, as suggested by The Netherlands Council of Churches and Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand (World Council of Churches, “The Nature and Purpose of the Church: Response of the Member Churches to *The Nature and Purpose of the Church*”). The Presbyterian Church of United States of America recommended the revised work to employ the biblical images of the Church in a vivid and lively manner instead of static images or abstract ideas (World Council of Churches, “The Nature and Purpose of the Church”).

¹⁷¹ Faith and Order, *The Nature and Mission of the Church: A Stage on the Way to A Common Statement: Faith and Order Paper 198* (Geneva: WCC, 2005), 4.

¹⁷² Cf. Faith and Order, *The Nature and Mission of the Church: A Stage on the Way to A Common Statement: Faith and Order Paper 198* [*NMC* onwards], 4.

accompanied by the widely acknowledged concept “*koinonia*” or “communion. “*Koinonia*” provides a hermeneutical substratum for the discussion of these three biblical concepts. This is primarily for the reason that the *NMC*’s ecclesiological paradigm is founded on the paradigm of “initial communion – brokenness of communion – restoration of communion – fulfilment of communion”.¹⁷³ *NMC*’s way of approaching *koinonia* does not differ from *NPC* on major points, but the former certainly puts more emphasis on the missional aspect of *koinonia*. Also, *NMC* discloses a Christological input in *koinonia* as its underlining feature is “being in Christ” and “Christ in them”.¹⁷⁴ The restored communion experienced by the Church, which orbits around Christ, streams towards the vision of the materialisation of full *koinonia* in the eschaton. This dimension denotes the vocational side of *koinonia*, which mirrors the crucified and risen Christ and, at the same time, anticipates the Kingdom of God.¹⁷⁵ In the account of “already, but not yet”, *NMC*, despite the divergence in terms of the interpretation, implements the *gift-and-calling* paradigm. Together with this, *NMC* also largely follows the line of understanding expressed in *NPC*, in a sense that it highlights the limitedness of ‘the new life of communion’ in this world, whose capacity cannot cover the complete restoration of the initial communion. Thus, it is stated that the Church is in constant need of ‘repentance, mutual forgiveness, and restoration’.¹⁷⁶

On holiness and sin, *NMC* largely carries along the established points made in *NPC* and adds some words for the sake of more specific signification. The broad paradigm of *gift and calling* continues to form the framework of discussion of holiness and sin, which is showcased by the continuous usage of the expressions ‘the Church is an eschatological reality’ as well as ‘a historical reality’ that is ‘exposed to the ambiguities of all human history’.¹⁷⁷ The human dimension of the Church is explained in mainly three sections, following the *NPC*: change, ‘individual, cultural and historical conditioning’ and the power of sin.¹⁷⁸ “Change” seems to mean the development of the life and witness of the Church alongside the shifting contextual elements that surround the ecclesial life, seeing the expression that it can lead either to ‘positive development and growth’ or ‘decline and distortion’.¹⁷⁹ “Individual, cultural and historical conditioning” appears to signify more of the contextual aspects that are categorised into groups according to the particularity of a region, nation, culture and history, considering that they are able to ‘contribute to a richness of insights and expressions of faith’ while also ‘to relativising tendencies or to absolutising particular views’.¹⁸⁰ “The power of sin” is noted without any further commentary, left undefined and under-discussed.¹⁸¹ *NMC* omits the dialectical approach presented in *NPC*, and also asks ‘whether all churches might not be able to agree on the following proposition’:

¹⁷³ Cf. *NMC*, 25-26.

¹⁷⁴ *NMC*, 29-30.

¹⁷⁵ *NMC*, 31-33.

¹⁷⁶ *NMC*, 59. The use of *koinonia* as a distinct depiction of the character of communion in *NPC* also receives several critical responses, mainly in the vein of pinpointing the gap between the conceptual designation and the empirical reality. The Church of Scotland queried over the reconcilability of *koinonia* as ‘a gift of God’ and the brokenness in the Church’s visible life (World Council of Churches, “The Nature and Purpose of the Church”). The Evangelical Church in Finland was reportedly satisfied with the balanced account of *koinonia* in tension with ‘the failure of living it’, whereas the Methodist Council in Great Britain finds that ‘the sinful nature of the Church’ needs be more spotlighted (World Council of Churches, “The Nature and Purpose of the Church”).

¹⁷⁷ *NMC*, 48.

¹⁷⁸ *NMC*, 50.

¹⁷⁹ *NMC*, 50. See also, *NPC*, 37.

¹⁸⁰ *NMC*, 50. See also, *NPC*, 37.

¹⁸¹ *NMC*, 50. See also, *NPC*, 37.

‘The relationship between sin and holiness in the Church is not a relationship of two equal realities, because sin and holiness do not exist on the same level. Rather, holiness denotes the Church’s nature and God’s will for it, while sinfulness is contrary to both (cf. 1 Cor. 15:21-26)’.¹⁸²

Additionally, *NMC* underlines the power of sin in the actual life of the Church, by adding the enunciation that ‘the new life of communion builds upon and transforms, but never wholly replaces, what was first given in creation, within history’ and thus ‘never completely overcomes the distortions of the relationship between human beings caused by sin’.¹⁸³ This sentence is posed in the midst of *already-but-not-yet reality* of the Church. Whilst the hope for the eschatological vision is evidently pronounced, *NMC* seems to underscore the portrayal of the reality of the Church in the *not-yet* realm.¹⁸⁴

Afterwards, *NMC* received critical comments from various groups. The group reports held in the Faith and Order Plenary Commission Meeting at Crete in 2009 examined *NMC* and posed critiques respectively. There were twelve groups in total, and their discussions were also quite interactive with the individual presentations done by several presenters from rather diverse background.¹⁸⁵ These reports were subsequently handed in to the working parties and the Standing Commission.¹⁸⁶ Shastri intimated that ‘Faith and Order has placed the highest priority for its work on preparing the next version of the text on the basis of the formal written responses received from 2006 to early 2010 and the responses emerging from this meeting of the Plenary Commission’.¹⁸⁷ The importance of the feedback from the Plenary Commission Meeting at Crete in 2009 is observable in the fact that, even though the previous Plenary Commission Meeting held in Kuala Lumpur put high significance on ecclesiology, there was not enough time for the revision of *NMC* since the meeting took place in 2004 and the text was published in 2005. It entails that ‘the Plenary Commissioners have a clear role in the shaping of the next version of the Faith and Order text on ecclesiology’.¹⁸⁸ Above all, the later convergence text *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* (CTCV) in 2013 evidently assigns the significance to the output of the Crete meeting, together with ‘the contributions of the Orthodox Consultation held in Cyprus in 2011, the ‘dialogue at the multilateral level’, and

¹⁸² *NMC*, 56-Box.

¹⁸³ *NMC*, 59.

¹⁸⁴ *NMC*, 59.

¹⁸⁵ Cf. Faith and Order, *Called to be the One Church: Faith and Order at Crete* (Faith and Order Paper No. 212), ed. by John Gibaut (Geneva: WCC, 2012), 255-256.

¹⁸⁶ It can be found in Appendix 2 which involves “Minutes of the meeting at the Orthodox Academy, Chania, Crete” (Faith and Order, *Called to be the One Church: Faith and Order at Crete* (Faith and Order Paper No. 212), 233.).

¹⁸⁷ Hermen Shastri, "The Future of the Nature and Mission of the Church: The Next Stages on the Way to a Common Statement", in Faith and Order, *Called to be the One Church: Faith and Order at Crete* (Faith and Order Paper No. 212), 150.

¹⁸⁸ Hermen Shastri, "The Future of the Nature and Mission of the Church: The Next Stages on the Way to a Common Statement", 155.

‘the responses of the churches’ to *NMC*.¹⁸⁹ More recent results from the bilateral dialogues were taken into account, as well.¹⁹⁰

It needs be noted that one of the most disputed points from the responses issued at Crete was the classical ecclesiological methodology that *NMC* text appears to adopt rather than contextually-sensitive experiential ecclesiological methods. Those who were in favour of a more contextualised approach to the documentation did not approve of *NMC*'s being an ontological, theological, dogmatic, and theoretical document.¹⁹¹ On the other hand, the others who did not disapprove of *NMC*'s methodology pointed out the practical impossibility of dealing with every single context in a document like *NMC*, which copes with the question of the Church.¹⁹² The importance of contextuality seems to receive a lot more space in *CTCV* as a result, but the general character of the document does not undergo fundamental alteration.

2.2.2. The Convergence Ecclesiology — *The Church: Towards A Common Vision* (2013)

CTCV is a convergence ecclesiology text, meaning that it does not provide such a text that demonstrates the consensus in fullness on every ecclesiological issue. Rather, the text showcases ‘the common understanding of the Church’ reached by the related churches along with the remaining topics of disagreement that surely asks for further discussion.¹⁹³

Accordingly, this document states:

‘We hope that *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* will serve the churches in three ways: (1) by providing a synthesis of the results of ecumenical dialogue about important ecclesiological themes in recent decades; (2) by inviting them to appraise the results of this dialogue – confirming positive achievements, pointing out deficiencies and/or indicating areas that have not received sufficient attention; and (3) by providing an occasion for the churches to reflect upon their own understanding of the Lord’s will so as to grow towards greater unity (cf. Eph. 4:12-16)’

¹⁸⁹ *CTCV*, Intro. As to the Inter-Orthodox Consultation Meeting in 2011, the Orthodox Church, involving the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox, also offered their reflections on *NMC*. Their meeting was held in Cyprus and consisted of forty participants that are ‘hierarchs, priests, deacons, university professors, lay (male and female) and youth, coming from nearly all the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches, as well as representatives of the World Council of Churches and the Faith and Order Commission (“Inter-Orthodox Consultation for A Response to the Faith and Order Study: The Nature and Mission of the Church: A Stage on the Way to a Common Statement (*Faith and Order Paper 198, 2005 WCC*)”, March 2-9 2011, 2.)’. It was also revealed that most of them ‘were also members of the Faith and Order Commission (‘Inter-Orthodox Consultation, 2.)’. Twenty papers were discussed and the text itself was investigated ‘as a whole and section by section (“Inter-Orthodox Consultation for A Response to the Faith and Order Study: The Nature and Mission of the Church: A Stage on the Way to a Common Statement”, 2.)’. The report displayed the participants’ acknowledgement that it was not intended or expected to be a ‘comprehensive Orthodox ecclesiology’, but to take into account the fact that it copes with the ‘multilateral ecumenical text aiming at convergence (“Inter-Orthodox Consultation”, 3, 6.)’. On the other hand, they also admitted that the insights that are supposed to contribute would manifest their tradition (“Inter-Orthodox Consultation”, 3.). In general, they accede that *NMC* ‘reflects Orthodox teaching and also many expressions that state ecclesiological principles in a fresh and original way’, albeit their reservations as to some subjects in the text (“Inter-Orthodox Consultation”, 4.).

¹⁹⁰ *CTCV*, Intro.

¹⁹¹ Cf. Faith and Order, *Called to be the One Church*, 210, 213, 224, 226-227.

¹⁹² Cf. Faith and Order, *Called to be the One Church*, 212, 218, 220.

¹⁹³ *CTCV*, Intro.

CTCV's status as the convergence text does not mean it should be regarded as complete or necessitating no more revision, but that it has reached a level of maturity to be identified as *convergent*, like *BEM*.¹⁹⁴

As for the textual analysis, it appears impossible and unnecessary to cover every point of argumentation in *CTCV*, for the focal point of discussion of the current work lies in the way in which the unity and holiness of the Church would be relatedly perceived particularly in the churches in Korea—more specifically those with the Reformed root. Accordingly, a measure is necessitated in order to bring forth a more narrowed-down approach to unity and holiness in *CTCV*, while not forgetting to shed light on the overall structure and distinct ecclesiological gist of the document. More specific attention will be given to how unity and holiness would come into play in togetherness within the overall framework of the document. Theological analysis will be provided together with succinct critique on several important points of argumentation on unity and holiness, which will be taken up into Chapter 5 of the dissertation.

2.2.3. Theological Analysis of *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* (2013)

Distinct from the former documents, the *CTCV* begins with the universal vision of God manifested in Christ 'for all creation' as 'God's great design' in which 'the Christian understanding of the Church and its mission is rooted'.¹⁹⁵ *Koinonia* retains its force as the central notion in a sense that the frame of "*koinonia - brokenness of koinonia - restoration of koinonia*", which can be detected in *NMC*, predominates the entire structure of ecclesiology of *CTCV*. Sin and disobedience are identified as causes that thwart the original relationship of *koinonia* between 'God, human beings and the created order', but are irrevocably overcome by the counterforce of the persistence of God's faithfulness materialised in 'the incarnation and paschal mystery of Jesus Christ'.¹⁹⁶ What is signified here is the unbreakable interrelation between the unity of the Church and its calling for mission in the world in light of the overarching notion of *koinonia*.

In response to its findings, *CTCV* puts forward the mandate of the Church for mission, which is identified with the proclamation of the Kingdom 'which Jesus had first proclaimed', 'inviting human beings from all nations to saving faith', 'initiating new members by baptism in the name of the Holy Trinity', being 'a community of worship' and discipleship where the proclamation, baptism, eucharist and ministry of guiding 'new believers to observe all that Jesus himself had commanded' are rightly performed.¹⁹⁷ The Holy Spirit is given substantial

¹⁹⁴ *CTCV*, Intro. See also, *CTCV*, Historical Note.

¹⁹⁵ *CTCV*, 1. In review of *NMC*, Group 2 at the Crete meeting recommended the more thorough articulation of the reality that mission is at the centre of ecclesiology (*Called to be the One Church*, 208.). Group 3 recorded that 'relatively little attention' was bestowed on the topic of mission, compared to the nature of the Church, notwithstanding the altered nuanced title *The Nature and Mission of the Church* (Faith and Order, *Called to be the One Church*, 210.). Group 6 posed the question whether 'the Church's commitment to action and cleansing and renewal' is able to 'sustain not only section IV of the text, but the whole of the text (Faith and Order, *Called to be the One Church*, 213-214.)'. They also suggested the Gospels as due sources in view of this problem, since they exhibit 'the strong orientation towards the Kingdom (Faith and Order, *Called to be the One Church*, 213-214.)'. Group 8 shared a similar apprehension and suggested that the title needed to be altered to "The Missionary/Missional Nature of the Church"; dropping the "and" (Faith and Order, *Called to be the One Church*, 221.). On the other hand, a problem was noticed since the changed title might blur the parallel between 'the "person and work" of Christ' alongside his 'being and doing (Faith and Order, *Called to be the One Church*, 221.)'.

¹⁹⁶ *CTCV*, 1.

¹⁹⁷ *CTCV*, 2. It should not be mistaken as abandoning the socio-ethical dimension of mission in *CTCV*, which is evidently absurd. The usual implication of proclamation in the Faith and Order Commission's work has been inclusive of both word and deed (*CTCV*, 5.). As a matter of fact, section four of *CTCV* makes a comment on the socio-ethical aspect (*CTCV*, 4.).

emphasis as the one who empowers Christians to follow the calling of mission.¹⁹⁸ *CTCV* quotes *Confessing the One Faith* here:

‘Christians believe and confess with the Creed that there is an indissoluble link between the work of God in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit and the *reality* of the Church. This is the testimony of the Scriptures. The origin of the Church is rooted in the plan of the Triune God for humankind’s salvation’.¹⁹⁹

The proclamation of the Kingdom of God, evangelism, fellowship, and discipleship are all encompassed in the portrayal of mission, and their teleology is to be observed in the plan and will of God for the salvation of humanity. God’s work in Christ is illuminated by the Spirit and the Church itself finds its root in this teleology. It seems to intimate an important consideration that a static and compartmentalised perspective on the unity of the Church and its mission is biblically untenable and not attempted in *CTCV*. In this framework, the Holy Spirit plays a significant role, since, instead of staticity, the sense of dynamicity is visibly at work.

After establishing the foundational understanding of the unity of the Church in interrelation to *missio Dei*, *CTCV* designates the nature of the Church with the name “The Church of the Triune God”. This depiction is in line with *NPC* and *NMC*, in a sense that the way in which Faith and Order perceives the derivative nature of the Church in dependence on the Trinity in terms of its origin and life is set forth. It is called forth by God, salvaged by and united with Jesus Christ, and led into faith by as well as instructed by the Holy Spirit through his presence, thereby having a living relationship with the Father.²⁰⁰ Axiomatically, the Church’s belonging to God and the impossibility of its self-sufficiency are expressed by *koinonia*, which is initiated and will be fulfilled by God for all creation.²⁰¹ The Church’s *koinonia* comes together with the will of God for salvation of humanity and creation. In this vein, the Church is called the body of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit, for its essential relation not only to Christ who is its abiding head, ‘guiding, purifying and healing it (cf. Eph. 5:26)’, but also to the Holy Spirit who operates within and empowers it so that ‘believers grow into “a holy temple in the Lord” (Eph. 2:21-22), into a “spiritual house” (1 Pet. 2:5)’.²⁰² Moreover, the Holy Spirit ‘bestows faith and other charisms upon individual believers’ and also ‘equips the Church with its essential gifts, qualities and order’.²⁰³ He ‘nourishes and enlivens the body of Christ’ through the proclamation of the Gospel, sacramental communion and ‘ministries of service’,²⁰⁴ and endows gifts, which are for ‘the common good (cf. 1 Cor. 12:7; Eph. 4:11-13)’, on believers ‘for the upbuilding of the Church and for his or her part in the mission of Christ’.²⁰⁵ The Church thereby is called to manifest its calling for visible unity, ‘worship, witness and service’ in the Holy Spirit so as to declare and materialise ‘the transformation for which all creation groans (cf. Rom. 8:22-23)’.²⁰⁶

¹⁹⁸ *CTCV*, 3.

¹⁹⁹ Faith and Order, *Confessing the One Faith*, para. 216. See also, *CTCV*, 3.

²⁰⁰ *CTCV*, 13.

²⁰¹ *CTCV*, 13. ‘The noun *koinonia* (communion, participation, fellowship, sharing), which derives from a verb meaning “to have something in common”, “to share”, “to participate”, “to have part in” or “to act together”, appears in passages recounting the sharing in the Lord’s Supper (cf. 1 Cor. 10:16-17), the reconciliation of Paul with Peter, James and John (cf. Gal. 2:7-10), the collection for the poor (cf. Rom. 15:26; 2 Cor. 8:3-4) and the experience and witness of the Church (cf. Acts 2:42-45) (*CTCV*, 13.)’.

²⁰² *CTCV*, 21.

²⁰³ *CTCV*, 16.

²⁰⁴ *CTCV*, 16.

²⁰⁵ *CTCV*, 18.

²⁰⁶ *CTCV*, 21.

In line with the teleology of salvation, the unity of the Church is explained in terms of visible unity. It ‘requires that churches be able to recognise in one another the authentic presence of what the Creed of Nicaea-Constantinople (381) calls the “one, holy, catholic, apostolic Church”’.²⁰⁷ Divergences are indicated in that there are examples of churches that only see themselves as ‘the Church of Christ’, those who acknowledge the *vestigia ecclesiae* within other communities, and others that have formed a certain covenantal relationship with other communities, connoting ‘the sharing of worship’.²⁰⁸ The churches that uphold the concept of the invisible Church are also mentioned.²⁰⁹ Divergent views remain on the interpretation of the four attributes of the Church, on discerning the God’s will for the Church’s unity, and on how to execute it.²¹⁰

The four attributes of the Church strongly connote the nature of the Church which proceeds from the nature of the Trinity and its dependency on Him. The link between the attributes—namely one, holy, catholic, and apostolic—is elucidated not in terms of mutual isolation, but of mutual informing and interrelation. They are also viewed in the sense of gift and calling, reason being that the essential condition of the Church is perceived as neither solely divine nor solely human, but both divine and human.²¹¹ Subsequently, it is promulgated that the oneness of the Church is essentially engendered by the oneness of God, which is exemplified in the oneness of faith and hope of the Church. At the same time, it is considered a calling, since the Church has gone through and not yet overcome divisions within it as a counter to Jesus’ prayer for its unity.²¹² The document claims, nevertheless, that the churches ‘understand themselves as founded in the one Gospel (cf. Gal. 1:5-9), and they are united in many features of their lives (cf. Eph. 4:4-7)’.²¹³ In the same fashion, God’s holiness defines the holiness of the Church, and, here, holiness is delineated with the Church’s being cleansed and purified by Jesus’ cleansing work by giving himself up and ‘washing of water by the word’. Nonetheless, sin is recognised in relation to holiness, as it beleaguers the Church by running ‘counter to the Church’s true nature and vocation’, disfiguring ‘the lives of believers’. ‘Repentance, renewal, and reform’ of people are constantly called for in her ministry.²¹⁴

The pronounced interrelation between the attributes of unity and holiness is not explicitly put forth in this section. It appears viable to make a link between unity and catholicity, which denotes the grace of God transcendently at work in the midst of contextual differences that derive from the temporal and spatial locality of the presence of the Church.²¹⁵ Also, drawing a connection between unity and apostolicity seems possible, in a sense that the common apostolic origin of the Church—original prophets and apostles sent by Christ—and its calling to be faithful to its origins in witness and worship can be adduced as an enriching dimension of the unity of the Church.²¹⁶ However, it is not quite conceivable to grasp how the holiness of the Church, which *CTCV* relates to the purifying work of Christ against the backdrop of the defacing force of sin, finds itself interconnected with the visible unity of the Church in a concrete manner. The way in which the divine and human reality of the Church can be

²⁰⁷ *CTCV*, 8-9.

²⁰⁸ *CTCV*, 10.

²⁰⁹ *CTCV*, 10.

²¹⁰ *CTCV*, 10.

²¹¹ *CTCV*, 22.

²¹² *CTCV*, 22.

²¹³ *CTCV*, 22.

²¹⁴ *CTCV*, 22.

²¹⁵ Cf. *CTCV*, 22.

²¹⁶ Cf. *CTCV*, 22.

understood in the interrelation between unity and holiness appears necessary. Still, the reality of the interrelation is emphasised, but not given an account.

As stated above, the Church is described as ‘a communion in the Triune God and, at the same time, a communion whose members partake together in the life and mission of God (cf. 2 Pet. 1:4), who as Trinity, is the source and focus of all communion’.²¹⁷ The language of “communion” is employed to render the meaning of unity in legitimate diversity. The sort of communion in God’s design is the communion in legitimate diversity. The concern of the legitimate diversity, first and foremost, is a pointer to the understanding of the Holy Spirit, for He is the provider of diversity by means of various gifts for the benefit of the community and its service. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are characterised as complementary for the common good. Furthermore, diversity can be explained by the distinct development of congregations in regions with dissimilar cultural and socio-political backgrounds. Any exclusivistic attitude in one’s own expression of the Gospel in denunciation of other cultural expressions is not accepted, but only deemed the compromise of legitimate diversity itself.²¹⁸ The legitimate diversity, therefore, is essentially related to the unity of the Church because this unity pinpoints nothing other than the fellowship of churches, connoting the common faith, sacraments and mission and derived mutual accountability. What is more, diversity cannot be counted legitimate if it threatens the established confession of Jesus Christ or the very nature of catholicity and integrity of God’s creation by use of political means or other sorts of activities.²¹⁹ Tackling this issue successfully is still a challenge since churches have not reached full agreement on ‘common criteria or means of discernment’ of legitimate diversity.²²⁰

At this juncture, as it is tied with the unity of the Church, finding the trace of catholicity and apostolicity in the notion of legitimate diversity is most appropriate. The commonality of faith, sacraments, and the same Spirit’s work in divergent contextual backgrounds is indicative of such consideration. Nonetheless, the tangible inclusion of holiness in the explanation of legitimate diversity does not seem to be present. The question remains unanswered on how to conceive the purifying work of Christ in the Spirit to understand what is legitimate diversity—which is unity in diversity. In fact, the understanding of the place of holiness in the discussion of legitimate diversity is crucial, seeing the extent that *CTCV* intends to lay on the local church in the context of its relation to the universal Church in ‘the ecclesiology of communion’.²²¹ *CTCV*’s position is that ‘the universal Church is the communion of all local churches united in faith and worship around the world’, and it refers to the New Delhi, Uppsala, and Nairobi report on the unity of the Church, betokening the concepts such as “all in each place” in New Delhi, “the catholicity of the Church” in Uppsala, and “conciliar fellowship” in Nairobi.²²² This vein of understanding is evidently propped by

²¹⁷ *CTCV*, 23.

²¹⁸ *CTCV*, 28.

²¹⁹ *CTCV*, 28-30. Inter-Orthodox Consultation paper critiques *NMC*’s discussion of “the limits of diversity”, especially for the reason that, in the Orthodox’ perspective, the document does not touch upon the boundaries of diversity and thereby the possibility of heresy for that matter. First of all, a diverse expression should find itself substantiated by the recognition that it is ‘a gift of God’, which would not disrupt the communion but ‘strengthen the Church (“Inter-Orthodox Consultation”, 24.)’. Secondly, there is a possibility that a diverse expression can actually be discerned heretical, and yet *NMC* ‘fails to help the churches identify for themselves or for each other (“Inter-Orthodox Consultation”, 25.)’. *CTCV* accounts for the earliest churches’ practice that regarded the essentials, as appears in Acts 15:28, as a fundamental element for legitimate diversity in unity. The succeeding event in Nicaea in 325 determined the divinity of Christ as the essentials for legitimate diversity. The much more contemporary example given in the document is the condemnation of the practice of apartheid in South Africa (*CTCV*, 30.).

²²⁰ *CTCV*, 30.

²²¹ *CTCV*, 31.

²²² *CTCV*, 31.

the emphasis on the local church itself, and *CTCV* says ‘each local church contains within it the fullness of what it is to be the Church’, so that ‘it is wholly Church, but not the whole Church’.²²³ Likewise, the concept of communion of local churches is more specified to be not mere ‘sum, federation or juxtaposition’, but rather ‘all of them together are the same Church present and acting in this world’.²²⁴ Based on this view, the significance of holiness in legitimate diversity is more evident when the universal Church is acknowledged as “the communion of local churches”. Thus, it seems reasonable to suggest that holiness, originating from the holiness of God,²²⁵ should also provide its own necessary components, principles, criteria and guidance to the concept of legitimate diversity, just as catholicity and apostolicity do.

The perceived lack of interrelation between unity and holiness in the discussion above does not suggest the absence of the reality of sin in the Church. Against the background of the eschatological reality of the Church, the acknowledgement of the reality of sin is made visible. The Church’s eschatological reality is expressed together with the concept of “already but not yet”. In this in-between *status quo* of the Church, the Holy Spirit is ‘guiding the whole process of salvation history to its final recapitulation in Christ to the glory of the Father’.²²⁶ The guidance of the Spirit does not seem to completely kill the presence of sin. *CTCV* explains the dual reality of the Church in accordance with “already” and “not yet”. The arrival and flourishing of the communion of the Church co-exists with the fluctuating possibility of the conditions of the world and the power of sin.²²⁷ In this provisional setting, it is recognised that the Church is composed of the members who ‘are subject to the conditions of the world’.²²⁸ There always exists in the existence of the Church, therefore, the possibility of prevailing in truth and love of Christ as well as of plummeting into deviation. Still, simultaneously, the guidance of the Spirit generates an understanding that every sort of limitedness emanating from the conditions of the world as well as the reality of sin does not have a final claim. Despite remaining divergences on the possibility of the sinfulness of the Church among different ecclesiastical traditions, the important point stays unchanged, which is that ‘the gates of hell cannot prevail against’ the Church as Christ promised, even while both individual Christians and churches as groups of people could recede into sinning because

²²³ *CTCV*, 31. It is found that Group 12 at Crete asked for clearer depiction of the meaning of the term “the Church”, by cause of the possibilities of identifying it with ‘the universal Church, the local church, or something else (Faith and Order, *Called to be the One Church*, 229.)’. A study document *The Church: Local and Universal* published in 1990 by the Joint Working Group between the World Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church suggests early on the relationship between the local and universal Church: ‘The one church is to be envisioned as a conciliar fellowship of local churches which are themselves truly united. In this conciliar fellowship, each local church possesses, in communion with the others, the fullness of catholicity, witnesses to the same apostolic faith, and therefore recognises the others as belonging to the same church of Christ and guided by the same Spirit. As the New Delhi assembly pointed out, they are bound together because they have received the same baptism and share in the same eucharist: they recognise each other’s members and ministries. They are in their common commitment to confess the gospel of Christ by proclamation and service to the world (World Council of Churches and Roman Catholic Church, “The Church: Local and Universal: A Study Document Commissioned and Received by the Joint Working Group”, in *Growth in Agreement II: Reports and Agreed Statements of Ecumenical Conversations on a World Level, 1982-1998*, Jeffrey Gros, FSC, ed. by Harding Meyer and William G. Rusch (Geneva: WCC, 2000), 869.)’. The report examines the issue of priority, and concludes that, when it boils down to ‘God’s general plan of salvation’, universality comes to be prioritised over locality, whereas, as long as the concrete situatedness of ‘the foundation of the church’, the latter takes over priority (World Council of Churches and Roman Catholic Church, “The Church: Local and Universal: A Study Document Commissioned and Received by the Joint Working Group”, 868.).

²²⁴ *CTCV*, 31.

²²⁵ *CTCV*, 22.

²²⁶ *CTCV*, 33.

²²⁷ *CTCV*, 34-35.

²²⁸ *CTCV*, 34.

of their fragility against 'the power of sin'.²²⁹ The latter reality necessitates continuous *metanoia* and renewal.²³⁰ The structure is clear, however, that 'holiness expresses the Church's identity according to the will of God, while sin stands in contradiction to this identity (cf. Rom. 6:1-11)'.²³¹

This perception of sin and holiness is rather deterministic in the explanation of how the *a priori* triumph of holiness originated from God unconditionally guarantees the defeat of sin. The explanation stays at a surface level and leaves the complex dynamic of the reality of the Church unaddressed. This point becomes clear when *CTCV* states the unequal-ness between holiness and sin as they relate to the Church.²³² The irreversibility of the victory of Christ over sin along with His 'promise and grace' assures Christians of their permanent 'share in the fruit of that victory'.²³³ At this point, however, another missing puzzle that deserves due reflection comes into sight, which is the connection from the conception of holiness and sin to the concrete manifestation of the unity of the Church through the lens of the eschatological perspective of "already-but-not-yet". The dynamic of the "not-yet-ness" and "already-ness" of the Church is expressed via the lens of sin and holiness, the former through the individual and collective vulnerability of Christians to sin and the accompanying necessity of 'Christian self-examination, penitence, conversion (*metanoia*), reconciliation and renewal', while the latter is expressed through the recognition of the ultimate triumph of the Church in Christ.²³⁴ That being the case, it needs to be addressed that, compared to the visible unity of the Church, the concrete manifestation of holiness as a gift and calling in the eschatological reality is less identified and given less space for articulation. Owing to this particular lack, it is not quite viable to perceive holiness and unity together in the eschatological perspective within the document.

Holiness as the life of the Church 'for God and for others' as the Uppsala report puts it, is plainly manifest in the *CTCV*'s emphasis on *missio Dei* and the central idea of *koinonia*.²³⁵ Early on, the concept of *koinonia ethic* was introduced in the Faith and Order work called *Costly Unity* in 1993. This work attempted to overcome the enduring disparity between the visible unity of the Church and ethics whose central concern was characterised along with the study process on JPIC.²³⁶ Its undergirding viewpoint was quite clearly disclosed that those two are not only inseparable, but also to be understood as 'two sides of the same coin'.²³⁷ Given that the Church is constantly encountered, challenged, and formed by *anamnesis* ('the memory of Jesus Christ'), the Church is to be called 'a *koinonia ethic*', rather than 'a social

²²⁹ *CTCV*, 35-36.

²³⁰ *CTCV*, 36.

²³¹ Faith and Order, *Called to be the One Church*, 2, cited by *CTCV*, 36.

²³² *CTCV*, 36.

²³³ *CTCV*, 36.

²³⁴ *CTCV*, 36.

²³⁵ World Council of Churches, "The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church", 5.

²³⁶ *Ecclesiology and Ethics*, vii.

²³⁷ *Ecclesiology and Ethics*, ix-x, 2.

ethic'.²³⁸ Moral failures compromise 'the holiness of the Church'.²³⁹ This understanding seems to resonate with the *CTCV*'s idea that *diakonia* 'belongs to the very being of the Church'.²⁴⁰

CTCV indicates that 'the reason for the mission of Jesus' is shown forth in John 3:16: "'God so loved the world that he gave his only Son'" — 'the first and foremost attitude of God towards the world' was love.²⁴¹ *CTCV* then puts the socio-ethical work of the Church in relation to the proclamation of the gospel: '...a constitutive aspect of evangelisation is the promotion of justice and peace'.²⁴² *CTCV* explains that divergence exists concerning the issue of the possibility of salvation of those who do not unequivocally believe in Jesus Christ. The disagreement comes up particularly in the context of global society with multi-religious presence and the Scriptural verses that reveal God's will for salvation of all and Jesus as the only Saviour such as Tim. 2:4 and Acts 4:12. This divergence is linked to the way in which the mission of the Church is implemented. According to *CTCV*, identifying the socio-ethical concern as 'a constitutive aspect of evangelisation' here by no means intends the reduction of its importance, but rather highlights the inseparability between the two. Christians' moral commitment is made possible by the foundation of 'faith and grace',²⁴³ and it is grounded upon the idea that 'the Church does not stand in isolation from the moral struggles of humankind as a whole'.²⁴⁴ The Church cooperates with 'the adherents of other religions as well as with all persons of good will' for justice, peace and preservation of the environment while maintaining conciliarity and mutual accountability,²⁴⁵ both of which verify the organic

²³⁸ *Ecclesiology and Ethics*, 4-5. The reason for interrelatedness between *anamnesis* and *koinonia* ethic could be provided by Harare report in 1998, in which Anastasios straightens out the meaningfulness of *anamnesis* in connection with the eucharistic practice. *Anamnesis* is comprehended as an action of the Spirit, through which the participants are drawn together into the memory of Christ and eschatological vision in consciousness (Anastasios, Archbishop of Tirana, Durres and All Albania, "The Theme: "Turn to God – Rejoice in Hope" – Anamnesis", in World Council of Churches, *Together on the Way: Official Report of the Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches*, 30, 33.). 'Thus, *anamnesis* becomes an incessant dynamic turning to the triune God, the source of being; a grafting into Christ, a receiving of the Holy Spirit (Anastasios, "The Theme: "Turn to God – Rejoice in Hope" – Anamnesis", 31.)'. 'The uniqueness of Christians' is brought to revivification through this eucharistic *anamnesis*, since the memory of Christ confers the churches the re-awakened knowledge of his being the model for them, together with the very reality of his crucifixion and resurrection (Anastasios, "The Theme: "Turn to God – Rejoice in Hope" – Anamnesis", 33). In this way, in their *metanoia*, the communicants are reminded of Christ's concerns and love for the world, coming to awareness concerning the significance of their responsibility in Christ (Anastasios, "The Theme: "Turn to God – Rejoice in Hope" – Anamnesis", 32). May also suggests that the term *koinonia* entails a strong sense of togetherness in communion as it portrays the image of Trinity, thereby bridling the conflict between the unity and the Church ethics due to the divisive character of ethics, politics and ideologies. *Koinonia* gets across the understanding of the community in which a formative process of moral decisions would be held in continuation along with the inspiration and insight from Christ and the understanding of the Church as a communion in Trinity (Melanie May, "The Unity We Share, the Unity We Seek", 98-99.).

²³⁹ *Ecclesiology and Ethics*, 5. The sacraments, in this context, came to be of significance, forasmuch as they appertain to the dynamics of person-shaping and sacramental living. Baptism and eucharist are invited to play a role, and the former entails the enactment of the value of the gospel in the baptised whereas the latter the striving for the healings of 'the brokenness of human being and community' through the realised communion (*Ecclesiology and Ethics*, 6-7.).

²⁴⁰ *CTCV*, 58.

²⁴¹ *CTCV*, 58.

²⁴² *CTCV*, 59. Regarding mission, whereas the Orthodox appreciated the linking between the four attributes and mission, they observed the want of connection between unity and mission. They saw mission as twofold: evangelical and social, and seem to try to see them together in one spectrum. The Church, according to their explanation, is not 'a charitable organisation', but, as the Body of Christ, 'acts in the power of the Holy Spirit to continue the life-giving mission of Christ in prophetic and compassionate ministry to the world' ("Inter-Orthodox Consultation", 35, 38.).

²⁴³ *CTCV*, 61.

²⁴⁴ *CTCV*, 62.

²⁴⁵ *CTCV*, 62.

nature of the Church in communal life—mutual affectability and accountability.²⁴⁶ Thus, their attitude is required to possess genuine seriousness and sincerity, and their thought and action towards socio-ethical matters should mirror ‘the value of the kingdom of God’ or the value of the gospel of Jesus Christ.²⁴⁷ This calling is not easy, simple, or cost-free. As believers could face a local authority that goes against the value of the Kingdom of God, their witness ‘will entail, for both individuals and for the community, the way of the cross, even to the point of martyrdom’.²⁴⁸

Under the underpinning framework of *koinonia*, it seems possible to see how holiness as mission is related to unity as communion. More importantly, this connection is visible throughout the document of *CTCV* from the beginning to the end: God's plan for the salvation of humanity and the Church.²⁴⁹ This paradigm seems to fit with the identification of sin as a moral imperfection or break in relationship, insofar as the socio-ethical mission of the Church is principally interpreted as its struggle and work for reconciliation together with and in the midst of the world in view of the values and vision of the Kingdom of God. If holiness is primarily conceived as such, then the calling for visible unity and holiness might be grasped together under the theme of *koinonia*. This framework is not intended to be static, as mentioned before, but brings forth a strong sense of dynamism, and this motive looks manifested rather clearly throughout the document. In other words, under the framework of *koinonia*, even while the believers' personal religious-ethical purity and piety is not definitely identified nor clearly brought into play in this structure of argument, it seems that viewing unity as communion and holiness as mission under the umbrella of *koinonia* is able to bring them together into a single view in *CTCV*.

2.3. Conclusion

In summary, the observation concerning the unity and holiness of the Church suggests that, in *CTCV*, the nature of the Church especially in regards to unity and holiness portrays a primarily derived characteristic, since the emphasis is weighed on its "givenness" from the Trinity. The problem of disunity and unholiness originates in sin and disobedience, thereby calling for striving for unity as well as repentance and reform. However, the overall accent leans towards the understanding that, even though the aspect of "calling" forms a formal tension with "givenness", the givenness formally precedes and predominates the calling in virtue of the very solidification of the derivative nature of the Church from one and holy God. This particular structure of "gift and calling" is accompanied by the eschatological perspective of "already but not yet", which is brought into the underlying theme of *koinonia*. Holiness' role in this large framework, however, is understated and underrepresented particularly in its relation to the visible unity of the Church. Furthermore, it is addressed that, in comparison to catholicity and apostolicity, the way in which holiness can be brought in interrelation to unity is rather unclear, especially in the understanding of holiness as Christ's purifying work in the Spirit. In addition, a similar issue is the lack of space for the exploration of holiness' contribution to legitimate diversity or unity in diversity, whilst the explanation of this concept in *CTCV* makes visible the important components of catholicity and apostolicity. A possible way to comprehend the co-existence of holiness and unity is suggested, even though it is not explicitly articulated in the document. Only as far as the bigger picture of *koinonia* and the will of God for His creation are given prominence, holiness, which would be more narrowly identified in terms of social ethic and mission, could be coherently united with the visible unity of the Church as "communion of local churches".

²⁴⁶ *CTCV*, 62.

²⁴⁷ *CTCV*, 64-65.

²⁴⁸ *CTCV*, 65.

²⁴⁹ *CTCV*, 3.

[Chapter 3: Unity and Holiness of the Church in G. C. Berkouwer's Ecclesiology in *De Kerk I, II*]

Berkouwer's work on ecclesiology—*De Kerk I, II*—was written in 1970 and 1972 as the last volume of his *Dogmatische Studiën* series. In order to investigate his ecclesiological perspective, there are at least three areas that need be covered: his ecumenical context, his correlative approach to theologising that strongly characterises his ecclesiology and the texts of *De Kerk I, II*. His ecumenical context involves his own theological transition in terms of the attitude towards the theological voices outside his own circle. It also underlines his dialogical engagement with the Roman Catholic Church and his exposure to the Assembly of the World Council of Churches at New Delhi in 1961. Regarding his correlative approach, several of his books will be studied with attention to the concept "correlation". Lastly, regarding his ecclesiological works *De Kerk I, II*, the sections on unity and holiness will be analysed with an eye on the relatedness with catholicity and apostolicity, for his scope views the four attributes in their interrelatedness rather than in prioritisation or isolation.

3.1. Berkouwer's Theological Development: Contextualising Berkouwer

3.1.1. Early Apologetic and Defensive Stance

The main characteristic of Berkouwer's theological thinking in the early period of his career, especially from the 1930s to the early half of 1940s, is that he took a strong apologetic and defensive attitude in interaction with the other voices in accordance with the doctrinal positions of his denomination.²⁵⁰ This is especially true concerning the authority of Scripture, an issue that originated from the decision of the Synod of Assen in 1926 on the broader interpretation of Genesis 1-3 where Geelkerken was discharged from ministry.²⁵¹ Berkouwer himself acknowledged that his own standpoint was an isolated one at this time. The sheer defensiveness was explicit in his apologetic interaction with others including the Roman Catholic Church.²⁵² For instance, Berkouwer's response to the advocates for biblical criticism was based on the *a priori* guarantee of the authority of Scripture as the Word of God, which was understood as the necessity of *a priori* norm for faith. Under the flag of organic inspiration theory, the inspiration of Scripture by the Holy Spirit was maximised and the human influence was almost denied aside from the language that was used and the style of writing of biblical authors.²⁵³ A concept of formal and material distinction of the Scripture was sternly rejected, since it would water down the purity and trustworthiness of the

²⁵⁰ C. van der Kooi, "Berkouwer, Gerrit Cornelis", in *BLGNP*, 52. Berkouwer designates his earlier approach to be apologetic and aprioristic (G. Puchinger, *Gesprekken over Rome-Reformatie* (Delft: W. D. Meinema N. V., 1965), 305-306.). See also, A. van Egmond, 'Uiterst Barmhartigheid: Uitgangspunt, Inhoud en Criterium van Berkouwers Theologie', *Gereformeerde Theologisch Tijdschrift* 96 (3), 118.

²⁵¹ Dirk van Keulen, "The Theological Course of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands", in *Vicissitudes of Reformed Theology in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by George Harinck and Dirk van Keulen (Zoetermeer: Meinema, 2004), 100. Van Keulen designates that the post-Assen theological path of de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (GKN) was mostly delimited by the Synodal decision (Dirk van Keulen, "The Theological Course of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands", 100.).

²⁵² Dirk van Keulen, "The Theological Course of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands", 104. Van Keulen's book *Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, despite the various areas that the author touches upon as concerns Berkouwer's works, puts a focal attention on his view on and use of the Holy Scripture as they develop in the process of his constant interaction with other theologians (Dirk van Keulen, *Bijbel en Dogmatiek: Schriftbeschouwing en Schriftgebruik in het Dogmatisch Werk van A. Kuyper, H. Bavinck en G. C. Berkouwer* (Kampen: Kok, 2003), 285-638.).

²⁵³ Dirk van Keulen, *Bijbel en Dogmatiek: Schriftbeschouwing en Schriftgebruik in het Dogmatisch Werk van A. Kuyper, H. Bavinck en G. C. Berkouwer*, 329-332.

Scripture.²⁵⁴ Van Keulen takes note that Berkouwer's view was, in his early time, much closer to Kuypers than Bavinck in the way that the direct identification between the revelation and the Scripture is addressed.²⁵⁵ The fear of subjectivism was expressed in his calling for the norm of the faith,²⁵⁶ even while he expresses that the infallible authority of the Scripture is a matter of faith ('een quaestie van geloof') over against a mere theoretical postulate, in connection with the emphasis on the full divine authority of the Scripture.²⁵⁷

As regards the Roman Catholic dogmas, in accords with his view on the nature of the authority of the Scripture, in his book *De Strijd om het Rooms-Katholieke Dogma* in 1940, Berkouwer proceeded with his own theological conviction and had a motif for attacking Rome's normative theological positions through the norms held by himself while not resorting to caricatures, which he deemed not to uphold fairness.²⁵⁸ Steur reviewed that the fundamental focus of this book is an argument over the norm of the dogma ('een gevecht om de norm van het dogma').²⁵⁹ He also described that Berkouwer critiqued the way in which Roman Catholic theologians perceive the dividedness of the churches of the Reformation in terms of the necessary causality stemming from the subjectivism owing to their norm of the exclusive authority of the Scripture over the belief and practices of the Church.²⁶⁰ Berkouwer considered Steur's point too simplistic, not making any distinction between Old and New Protestantism, the latter of which attempts to free itself from the former because of its seeming relatedness to the culture of the Medieval period and break away from the confession of the Reformation ('*de belijdenis der Reformatie*' (Italics from the book)).²⁶¹ Together with this critique, Berkouwer argues for the authority of the Scripture as the Word of God above the Church and decries the definition of the tradition as an independent source of authority—equal to the Scripture.²⁶² Correspondingly, Berkouwer opines against dogmatic exegesis that

²⁵⁴ Dirk van Keulen, *Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, 323. Van Keulen introduces Geelkerken's reaction to this position taken by Berkouwer. For Geelkerken, there is no distinction between the Holy Scripture and the Word of God in Berkouwer and the Bible itself is directly the Word of God in Berkouwer's point of view (Cf. Dirk van Keulen, *Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, 320, ft.176.). See also, J. Veenhof, "Geschiedenis van Theologie en Spiritualiteit in de Gereformeerde Kerken", in *100 Jaar Theologie - Aspecten van een Eeuw Theologie in de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (1892-1992)*, ed. by M. E. Brinkman (Kampen: Kok, 1992), 59.

²⁵⁵ Dirk van Keulen, *Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, 310. Van Keulen explains that, despite the terminological usage of "theopneustie" by Berkouwer in reference to Bavinck, there is a clear distinction between the two theologians as regards their views on the Scripture (Dirk van Keulen, *Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, 311.).

²⁵⁶ Cf. C. van der Kooi, "Berkouwer, Gerrit Cornelis", 52.

²⁵⁷ G. C. Berkouwer, *Geloof en Openbaring in de Nieuwere Duitse Theologie*, Academisch Proefschrift (Utrecht: Kemink en Zoon N.V., 1932), 241-241. See also, Dirk van Keulen, *Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, 310.

²⁵⁸ Dirk van Keulen, *Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, 334, ft. 240, 342-343, ft. 284.

²⁵⁹ Cf. Dirk van Keulen, *Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, 335.

²⁶⁰ G. C. Berkouwer, *De Strijd om het Rooms-Katholieke Dogma* (Kampen: J.h. Kok, 1940), 79-82. See also, G. W. de Jong, *De Theologie van Dr. G. C. Berkouwer: Een Strukturele Analyse* (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1971), 47-48. Van Straaten voiced a similar point of view, stating that it is a mistake for Protestant theologians to use their own determined perspective on the revelation—the Scripture—and read and judge the positions taken by Rome, which are not exclusively confined by the Scripture only, but, instead, includes the Scripture (A. van Straaten, 'Het Leergezag der Kerk in de Polemie', 32, cited by Dirk van Keulen, *Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, 343.). Van Straaten seems to emphasise that the Protestant critique on Rome as to its position on the authority is often coloured by their own fixated conviction—*Sola Scriptura*—so that they would interpret the position of Rome as not determined at all by the Scripture (A. van Straaten, 'Het Leergezag der Kerk in de Polemie', 32, cited by Dirk van Keulen, *Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, 343.).

²⁶¹ G. C. Berkouwer, *De Strijd om het Rooms-Katholieke Dogma*, 96-97. See also, Dirk van Keulen, *Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, 335, ft. 247.

²⁶² G. C. Berkouwer, *De Strijd om het Rooms-Katholieke Dogma*, 116-119. Berkouwer reflects that, despite Rome's official position on the infallibility of the Scripture, putting the tradition next to it, within the context of Roman Catholic dogmatic position on the Church as an organ of the Holy Spirit, ends up pushing the Scripture to the background (G. C. Berkouwer, *De Strijd om het Rooms-Katholieke Dogma*, 105, 209.). He refers to the ascension of Mary as an example that does not directly derive from the Scriptural data, but from the tradition (G.

merely affirms what is already premised, presupposed, and established as a dogma by use of the Scripture.²⁶³ He emphasises listening to what the Scripture says as a whole in harmonious unity centred on Jesus Christ—self-examining whether one has done damage to the Scripture—and underscores submissive and prayerful reflection on the Scripture as an adequate approach.²⁶⁴

3.1.2. Gradual Change, Openness, and New Theology

Following the Second World War, the contours of Berkouwer's theology demonstrated gradual openness and were drawn more and more into the ecumenical discussion.²⁶⁵ Here, the openness does not signify a relativistic turn, but rather connotes the increased attitude of listening.²⁶⁶ Despite the common acknowledgement that *Conflict met Rome*, published in 1948 still insinuates the apologetic colour,²⁶⁷ van Keulen underlines two main differences that stand out in comparison to his earlier book on Rome. First of all, the change in terms of the tone of address to Rome in this book is detectable. The second work, in spite of the central position of the theme of "conflict", exhibits a somewhat milder tone than the first book in consonance with Berkouwer's opinion that the dialogue between Rome and the Reformation is necessary.²⁶⁸ Second, van Keulen narrates that, whereas the first book on Rome is about the fight for the norm of faith, the second book revolves around the central subject of soteriology: the gospel of the free and sovereign grace of God ('het Evangelie der vrije soevereine genade').²⁶⁹ Van Keulen points out that, for Berkouwer, this issue touches upon and

C. Berkouwer, *De Strijd om het Rooms-Katholieke Dogma*, 118. See also, Dirk van Keulen, *Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, 337.).

²⁶³ G. C. Berkouwer, *De Strijd om het Rooms-Katholieke Dogma*, 207-211.

²⁶⁴ G. C. Berkouwer, *De Strijd om het Rooms-Katholieke Dogma*, 214-215, 285. Berkouwer refers to Calvin: '...wanneer Calvijn over het vagevuur handelt, dan spreekt hij direct óók over Christus en Zijn voldoening, die in de gansche Schrift in haar heerlijkheid ons tegemoet komt. "De tekst" is voor Calvijn altijd een onderdeel van het ééne, groote, harmonische geheel der Schrift en zijn exegese laat zich nimmer van dit geloof abstraheren (G. C. Berkouwer, *De Strijd om het Rooms-Katholieke Dogma*, 214-215.)'. See also, Dirk van Keulen, *Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, 338-342. De Jong expounds it in terms of Berkouwer's correlation motif (G. W. de Jong, *De Theologie van Dr. G. C. Berkouwer: Een Strukturele Analyse*, 51.).

²⁶⁵ H. M. Vroom, "De Gelezen Schrift als Principium Theologiae", in *100 Jaar Theologie - Aspecten van een Eeuw Theologie in de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (1892-1992)*, ed. by M. E. Brinkman (Kampen: Kok, 1992), 141.

²⁶⁶ As an example, the increased attention to listening took place in Berkouwer's new reading of Barth in his book *De Triomf der Genade in de Theologie van Karl Barth* (Dirk van Keulen, *Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, 459, ft. 517. See also, J. J. Buskes, 'Berkouwer en Zijn Werk voor Ons Allen', *Woord en Dienst* 16 (1967), 225-226.).

²⁶⁷ Dirk van Keulen, *Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, 366.

²⁶⁸ Dirk van Keulen, *Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, 368

²⁶⁹ Dirk van Keulen, *Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, 369. Berkouwer puts emphasis on the role of the confession of the Reformation ('het reformatorisch belijden') over against Rome and the New Protestantism. However, at this time, Berkouwer draws attention to the gospel of grace ('het Evangelie der genade') as the centre of concern in relation to the depravity of human nature ('de verdorvenheid der menselijke natuur') (G. C. Berkouwer, *Conflict met Rome* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1949), 98-99.).

determines the other themes of conflict between Rome and the Reformation.²⁷⁰ Nevertheless, Berkouwer's tone still remains much more confrontational than dialogical.²⁷¹

The clear indication of shift of accent from disputation to dialogue appears in Berkouwer's work *Nieuwe Perspectieven in de Controvers: Rome-Reformatie* (Recent Development in Roman Catholic Thought in English translation) in 1957. The backdrop of this changed attitude is Berkouwer's increased interest in *nouvelle théologie* within the Catholic tradition.²⁷² He saw the groundwork of the new theology in the intensive historical and exegetical studies of the Scripture. The enhanced interest itself was preceded by his own renewed recognition of the significance of the genuine consideration of the humanity (menselijkheid) of the Scripture and the related questions thereof in the 1950s.²⁷³ In relation to this, Berkouwer perceived as an intriguing phenomenon the fact that the renewed approach to the interpretation of the decrees of Trent and the investigation into the relationship between the tradition and the Scripture become a real possibility in *nouvelle théologie*.²⁷⁴ Accordingly, it can be stated that Berkouwer's study of this new development lies in his constant interest in Rome, especially with regard to its dogmas and ecclesiology. The new theology, within the peculiar context of Rome and its dogmatic conviction, brings forth a renewed consideration and way of thinking

²⁷⁰ *Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, 369. A good example is Berkouwer's analysis of Mariological teaching by Rome in association with the absoluteness of the grace of God for salvation: '...de grondgedachte der Mariologie...is naast de visie van Rome op genade en vrijheid, op de verdienstelijkheid der goede werken en op de boete één van de symptomen van de Roomse *genade*-leer, waarin de genade—ondanks alle pogingen om haar souvereiniteit te accentueren—in *evenwicht* wordt gebracht met de meritoriale functie van het menselijke leven. Het is *dit* evenwicht, *deze* harmonie, die overal tot uiting komt in de afwijzing van het "sola fide" en het "sola gratia" en van de reformatorische leer van de verdorvenheid der menselijke natuur (Berkouwer, *Conflict met Rome*, 221.)'. Van Keulen detects the correlative principle in Berkouwer's critique on the Mariological teaching of Roman Catholic Church, in a way that Berkouwer rejects the meritorial function given to Mary by Rome in her obedience and thereby becoming the co-redeemer (medeverlosser) (Dirk van Keulen, *Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, 355-356.)

²⁷¹ Dirk van Keulen, "G.C. Berkouwer and the Council", 18.

²⁷² Berkouwer says thereby: 'Nu is het echter bij de bespreking van allerlei verschuivingen en eventuele perspectieven, die daarin besloten liggen, niet nodig te blijven staan bij fragmentarische discussies van soms verrassende aard. We komen in onze tijd ook in aanraking met nieuwe spanningen en dimensies, die een meer generaal karakter dragen en het ganse terrein der controvers ergus blijken te raken. Ik heb het oog op de probleemstelling van de z.g.n. "théologie nouvelle", meestal verbonden met de Franse School van Lyon-Fourvière, waaruit reeds een reeks brillante publicaties verscheen ongeveer sinds 1942, publicaties, die nog steeds in het middelpunt der belangstelling staan' (G. C. Berkouwer, *Nieuwe Perspectieven in de Controvers: Rome-Reformatie* (Amsterdam: N.V. Noord-Hollandsche UitgeversMaatschappij, 1957), 14.).

²⁷³ Berkouwer's article 'Is de Bijbel Duidelijk?' throws an intriguing question of whether the Scripture is really clear, seeing the sheer disparity of contrasting doctrines (G. C. Berkouwer, 'Is de Bijbel Duidelijk?', *Gereformeerd Weekblad* 7 (1951-1952), 233.). What is noticeable about the article 'De Weg van het Woord' is the clear indication of the expanding reflection on the human mediation of the Bible. At the same time, he recognises the complexity of the Scripture. He underscores the correlative nature of the comprehensibility of the Scripture as the genuine voice of God in all its humanness, as made explicit in the expression: 'het boek van Gods bijzondere zorg, dwars door de historie en dwars door het volle en onstuimige mensenleven heen, door twijfel en ongelooft, door oorlog en vrede, door catastrophes en uitreddingen, door dalen en bergen, door zonde en schuld, door redding en heiliging heen...in dit alles: Zijn waarlijk *Goddelijke* stem, die klonk en klinkt hier midden in ons *menselijk* leven, verstaanbaar voor wie luistert en luisteren wil met een aandachtig hart' (G. C. Berkouwer, 'De Weg van het Woord', *Gereformeerd Weekblad* 7 (1951-1952), 241-242, and Dirk van Keulen, *Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, 398.). Van Keulen considers the period between 1952 and 1959 as the time of gradual change of perspective in the theology of Berkouwer. The expression "de *vox Dei* in de *vox humana*" in the article 'Rooms-Katholieke Aandacht voor de "Organische-Inspiratie"' in 1956 is quite noticeable as it signposts Berkouwer's genuine attention to the human character of the Scripture, let alone the probable influence of Barth's view of the Scripture as well as the connection that Berkouwer makes here with the new theology within the Catholic circle (Cf. Dirk van Keulen, *Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, 415-416, 456-457. See also, G. C. Berkouwer, 'Rooms-Katholieke Aandacht voor de "Organische-Inspiratie" (Het Menselijke in de Schrift)', *Gereformeerd Weekblad* 12 (1956-1957), 113.). Van Keulen notes a clear shift after 1959 together with giving weight on the material authority of the Scriptures and questions concerning the biblical and historical worldview ('het bijbelse wereld- en geschiedenisbeeld'), which definitely touches upon the important further questions such as the decision of the Synod of Assen in 1926 (Dirk van Keulen, *Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, 457-458, ft. 513.).

²⁷⁴ G. C. Berkouwer, *Nieuwe Perspectieven in de Controvers: Rome-Reformatie*, 11-14.

as to the dogmas of the Church and other ecclesiological subjects. The change of accent is clearly observable in *Nieuwe Perspectieven in de Controversen*, but as Van Keulen elucidates, it did not imply that Berkouwer now became uncritical of Rome. Instead, rather than being captivated unceasingly by the dividing issues with polemical inclination, he now increasingly took note of the common topics of interest and challenges as ecumenical problems.²⁷⁵

Berkouwer observed that the continuity of the Church and the unassailable position of the dogmas of the Church are demonstrated through the idea of *ex cathedra*, which is tied up with the papal authority. Here, the papal authority does not intimate the pope creating new dogma or the infallible personhood of the pope, but enunciates the presence and assistance of the Holy Spirit, *assistentia divina*, when he declares on the matters of faith and morals.²⁷⁶ Against the background, Berkouwer saw that the papal calling for intensive biblical studies was expressed in several encyclicals, e.g. *Providentissimus Deus* in 1893, *Spiritus Paraklitus* in 1920 and *Divino Afflante Spiritu* in 1943, and the biblical studies was connected with the new reflection on the gospel.²⁷⁷ The impact of the Word in the new theology is visible within the peculiar dogmatic context of Rome.²⁷⁸

In this connection, Berkouwer observed the integralists' reaction to *nouvelle théologie*. The famous papal encyclical *Humani Generis* written by Pius XII in 1950 is introduced as an example. At least, Berkouwer conceived that certain tendencies in the new theology appear as one of the main targets of criticism by the pope's designation of erroneous positions.²⁷⁹ The characteristic of the new theology lies in its impetus towards the renewal of theological thinking within a new context without compromising the Catholic truth. Over against the fear of assimilation, de Lubac's underscoring of the human limitedness as well as the inexhaustibility of the truth is spotlighted.²⁸⁰ The imperfection and brokenness of human thinking ('de onvolmaaktheid en gebrokenheid van het menselijk denken'), not irrationalism, are interlinked with the mystery-full and unquenchable truth and reality ('de geheimenissvolle en onuitputtelijke waarheid en werkelijkheid').²⁸¹ Pius XII's primary concern was the possibility of the incursion of dogmatic relativism through a theological attempt that distinguishes the unchangeable dogmatic truths and the changeable philosophical forms of dogmas that are time-bound and not absolute.²⁸² The pope expressed that there is really no

²⁷⁵ Cf. Dirk van Keulen, 'G.C. Berkouwer and the Council', 18. Echeverria finds the importance of Berkouwer in his ecumenical practice on the basis of 'the Reformed confessional tradition', and his critical stance was not erased in his later works on Catholicism, in which his open-mindedness and the willingness 'to learn from others' was showcased (Eduardo Echeverria, *Berkouwer and Catholicism: Disputed Questions* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 6, 44.).

²⁷⁶ G. C. Berkouwer, *Recent Developments in Roman Catholic Thought* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1958), 13-14. Berkouwer shows his concern that, as *ex cathedra*'s absolute character is dominant, 'the question of standards' would no longer be raised in a time when 'people have become estranged from the gospel' and 'uncertainty occupies their hearts' (Berkouwer, *Recent Developments in Roman Catholic Thought*, 15.).

²⁷⁷ Berkouwer, *Nieuwe Perspectieven*, 29-30.

²⁷⁸ Berkouwer, *Recent Developments*, 42-43, 63.

²⁷⁹ Berkouwer points out that it is the case even granting that no specific names are indicated in relation to the new theology, since the analysis of the encyclical intimates such interpretation (Berkouwer, *Recent Developments*, 49-51.).

²⁸⁰ Berkouwer understands de Lubac thereby: 'De ogen moeten open staan voor "l'état social, intellectuel, culturel, toujours en mouvement", een beweging, waar het dogma niet buiten staat' (Berkouwer, *Nieuwe Perspectieven*, 19-20.).

²⁸¹ Berkouwer depicts von Balthasar's viewpoint here: 'Hans Urs von Balthasar roept uit: de mens in onze tijd "wird durch den Empfang der je neuen Wahrheit Gottes nicht verstopft sein durch geistliche und weltliche Schemata und Vorurteile, die von gestern stammen und so, wie sie gestern berechtigt waren, nicht wiederkehren und nicht hinreichen fürs Heute" (Berkouwer, *Nieuwe Perspectieven*, 24.).

²⁸² Berkouwer mentions Henri Bouillard's inquiry over the unchanging truth and the design in dogmatic decision and theology. The latter is the representation of the former whose unchangeability is thereby affirmed, as Berkouwer cites Bouillard: "'L'histoire manifeste donc à la fois la relativité des notions, des schèmes, où la théologie prend corps et l'affirmation permanente, qui les domine" (Berkouwer, *Nieuwe Perspectieven*, 20-21.).

reason to challenge the established doctrines when they were formed by holy figures and in the guidance of the Holy Spirit in terms of not only the content but also the form, particularly in the theology of Thomas Aquinas.²⁸³ And yet, as far as Berkouwer's viewpoint is concerned, the intention and direction of the new theology are rather directed against all agnosticism or irrationalism in accordance with the motives in *Humani Generis*.²⁸⁴

3.1.3. New Delhi Assembly (1961) and World Council of Churches

Another significant aspect of Berkouwer's ecumenical context is his experience and assessment of the New Delhi Assembly in 1961 of the World Council of Churches, to which he went together with E. G. van Teylingen. Formerly, Gereformeerde Kerken Nederland (GKN) did not really approve of the World Council of Churches. The general synod at Zwolle in 1946 declared that the required condition for GKN to join the ecumenical world council (oecumenische wereldraad) and the Dutch Ecumenical Council of Churches ('Nederlandsche Oecumenische Raad der Kerken') was not present: holding on to the confession of Jesus Christ as God and Saviour, not merely in terms of a formal expression, but of the undiminished content of the Scripture.²⁸⁵ Subsequently, the synod at Eindhoven in 1948 stood by the preceding decision in respect to joining the Council, despite its acknowledgement of the Basis of the Council as well as the Council's exclusion of the communities that do not accept the submission to the Christ of the Scripture ('Christus der Schriften').²⁸⁶

The synod at 's-Gravenhage (1949-1950) set forth extended reasons for its rejection of the membership of the Council. The reasons it provided mainly revolved round the theme of keeping the Reformed orthodoxy intact. It gave a disclaimer, first of all, that GKN is not doing so in a spirit of Pharisaic self-righteousness, but seeking the genuine Christian unity, as it recognises its own sin and shortcomings in the context of ecclesial division.²⁸⁷ As of the reasons for rejection, the synod considered the Basis of the Council to be deficient, primarily due to its ambiguity.²⁸⁸ The Council's position not to interfere with the manner of the interpretation of the Basis basically allowed liberal interpretations.²⁸⁹ The synod pinpointed two types of liberalism, namely left-modernism (links-modernisme) and right-modernism (rechts-modernisme). The shortcoming of the former was resisting the church's very confession, whereas the latter displayed more of the biblically as well as psychologically valued content of the terminologies of confession. Both of them, according to the synod, lacked the humble obedience to the revelation of God, which belongs to the essence of the

²⁸³ Berkouwer, *Nieuwe Perspectieven*, 33-34.'.

²⁸⁴ Berkouwer, *Nieuwe Perspectieven*, 34-35.

²⁸⁵ *Acta van de Generale Synode van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, gehouden te Zwolle van 27 Augustus tot 2 October 1946* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, n.d.), 106-107. See also, J. Plomp, *Een Kerk in Beweging: De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland na de Tweede Wereldoorlog*, (J. H. Kok: Kampen, 1987), 32.

²⁸⁶ *Acta van de Generale Synode van Eindhoven 1948 van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland Gehouden te Eindhoven van 3-19 Februari 1948* (Kampen: J. H. Kok, n.d.), 41.

²⁸⁷ *Acta van de Generale Synode en van de Voorgezette Generale Synode van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, gehouden te 's-Gravenhage van 23 Augustus tot 3 November 1949 en van 28 Februari tot 3 Maart 1950* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, n.d.), 437. It is acknowledged along with the synod's conviction that Afscheiding in 1834 and Doleantie in 1886 through which GKN has come to its current form are offered through the Word of God ('door Gods Woord geboden waren') (*Acta 's-Gravenhage*, bijlage LXXXIV, 437).

²⁸⁸ The report gets across that, compared to the Basis of the World Council of Churches, the International Council of Churches (ICC) and the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) present the unambiguous versions of the doctrinal basis for membership (*Acta 's-Gravenhage*, bijlage LXXXIV, 436). It is the case even while a patent difference existed in the matter of the inclusion of the church discipline over the life and the doctrine in the ecclesial settings, which finds its place in the ICC's document, but not in the NAE's (*Acta 's-Gravenhage*, 435-436, 440.).

²⁸⁹ *Acta 's-Gravenhage*, 438.

Christian faith.²⁹⁰ Secondly, due to the heterogeneous composition of the Council, bringing to the world the single witness of light and salvation in accordance with the Word of God seemed impossible.²⁹¹ There were non-orthodox churches within the membership of the Council, which did not take the confessional issues seriously.²⁹² A deep suspicion and doubt persisted concerning whether this is a kind of unity that the churches desired.²⁹³ The only root for true unity is the God of the Revelation ('de God der Openbaring') as well as the Christ of the Scripture ('de Christus der Schriften').

The synod of Leeuwarden in 1955, as Plomp explains, was the major turning point on whether to join the World Council of Churches.²⁹⁴ It appears that this new direction emerged out of a general sense of dissatisfaction with maintaining the previous synodal decisions, especially that of 's-Gravenhage. The question of the pluriformity of the Church as well as that of the standard of the common confession that is necessary for conversation (samenspreking) and cooperation (samenwerking) became the main topic to be wrestled with. Seven deputies and three secondi (secundi) were nominated to research these topics until a clear elucidation was to be provided. Meanwhile, the synod decided to stick with the foregoing decision regarding the WCC.²⁹⁵

Against this backdrop of transition, the synod at Apeldoorn in 1961 decided to send Berkouwer to New Delhi. Berkouwer's report afterwards displayed the major christological concern expressed at the synod at Zwolle in 1946. Berkouwer recognised the coexistence of the Council's Scripture reading (bijbellezing) with all of its discussions that circle around the centrality of the confession of Jesus Christ as God and Saviour.²⁹⁶ Consequently, Berkouwer's position stood apart from the defensive position of GKN earlier, e.g. the synodal meeting at 's-Gravenhage. Instead of rejecting outright the christological formula of the Basis as lacking in content, Berkouwer tried to go deeper into the real question whether this confession really functioned as a dominant power. He concluded that it was the Council's intention not to be compliant with syncretism but to rebuff it. The calling of the name of Jesus Christ was not empty, but real, and Berkouwer also shared his impression that all the churches present at the Assembly were tied to the common basis.²⁹⁷ The Council did not try to level out all differences among churches, neither did it aim to become a superchurch nor pretend that it is the *ecclesia una sancta*. Instead, it looked like a meeting place where the churches serve each other in the understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Berkouwer deferred from the idea that the Council was attempting to make all religions into a big religious movement. The question that must be put forward is whether the churches can and may withdraw from the

²⁹⁰ *Acta 's-Gravenhage*, 439.

²⁹¹ *Acta 's-Gravenhage*, 441.

²⁹² *Acta 's-Gravenhage*, 439.

²⁹³ *Acta 's-Gravenhage*, 439.

²⁹⁴ J. Plomp, *Een Kerk in Beweging: De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland na de Tweede Wereldoorlog* (J. H. Kok: Kampen, 1987), 32.

²⁹⁵ *Acta van de Buitengewone Generale Synode van Utrecht 1954 en van de Generale Synode van Leeuwarden 1955 en 1956 van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, gehouden te Utrecht op Dinsdag 29 Juni 1954 en te Leeuwarden van 23 Augustus tot 30 September 1955, van 17 Januari tot 26 Januari 1956, 3 April tot 26 April 1956 en 24/25 Mei 1956* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, n.d.), 144-147.

²⁹⁶ *Acta van de Generale Synode van Apeldoorn 1961 en 1962 van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, gehouden te Apeldoorn op 3 Mei 1961, van 29 Augustus 1961 tot 22 September 1961, van 8 Januari 1962 tot 12 Januari 1962, en van 19 Februari 1962 tot 22 Februari 1962* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, n.d.), 316-317.

²⁹⁷ It means by no means that the Basis operates as a conscience restraint (gewetensdwang) for the member churches. Berkouwer explained that he witnessed a lot of objections against the formula of the Basis not only from the Netherlands, but also from the United States of America and France (*Acta Apeldoorn*, Art. 373.).

responsibility for other churches in the world, not whether they can play a huge role in the Council or not.²⁹⁸

Afterwards, the synod of Groningen in 1964 conveyed its ecumenical conviction that the churches are called to fulfil the ecumenical calling, insofar as the Basis maintains a clear christological character ('een duidelijk christologisch karakter') and does not come into conflict with the Scripture. The synod did not detect a decisive obstacle for GKN to join the World Council of Churches; however, it remarked that there were still different opinions on the way in which the Basis of the Council worked, for which further studies were needed, and the local churches were due to come to know the current subject matter.²⁹⁹ After the general synod at Amsterdam from 1967 to 1968 where the divergence of opinions from the regional groups, synods, and councils on joining the World Council of Churches was introduced, the general synod at Sneek from 1969 to 1970 arrived at the final decision in alignment with the previous synod at Groningen and decided to apply for the membership of the World Council of Churches.³⁰⁰ In 1971, subsequently, the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches accepted the GKN into membership.³⁰¹

The viewpoint expressed at the synod of Groningen echoes Berkouwer's assessment of the New Delhi Assembly in 1961, which strongly reflects the critical significance of christological definiteness in words and deeds as basis for ecumenical involvement. He also did not side with the idea that one Christian tradition has a claim for the absolute possession of truth as he also consistently critiqued Rome for the same reason. He also rejected simplistic caricatures, and showed desire for the responsible comprehension of World Council of Churches. Above all, his listening attitude is clearly present. It strived for the understanding of underlying motif and intention as well as resisted the dominance of mere polemical or antithetical preconception in drawing judgment.

3.1.4. Vatican Council (1962-1965)

Berkouwer was one of the few that received an invitation as observer to the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965).³⁰² His interest in *nouvelle théologie* continued in his first writing: *Vatikaans Concilie en Nieuwe Theologie* in 1964 written in the midst of the Council, *Nabetrachting op het Concilie* in 1968 composed after the end of the Council.³⁰³ Those two books were written from an insider perspective, for the lack of which Berkouwer's early works on Rome had been criticized.³⁰⁴ Berkouwer showed anticipation together with realistic attitude to the possible outcome of the Council. Van Keulen cites Berkouwer thereof:

²⁹⁸ *Acta Apeldoorn*, Art. 372.

²⁹⁹ *Acta van de Generale Synode van Groningen 1963 en 1964 van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, gehouden te Groningen-Zuid op 2 en 3 Mei 1963, gehouden te Lunteren van 7 Januari 1964 tot 17 Januari 1964 en van 2 Maart 1964 tot 6 Maart 1964* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, n.d.), Art. 412-414. See also, J. Plomp, *Een Kerk in Beweging: De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland na de Tweede Wereldoorlog*, 33.

³⁰⁰ The synod also clarified that it is going to search for contacts with other churches and groups outside the World Council of Churches *Acta van de Generale Synode van Sneek 1969 en 1970 van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, gehouden te Sneek op 13 Mei 1969, te Lunteren van 25 Augustus t/m 5 September 1969, van 27 t/m 31 October 1969, van 24 t/m 28 November 1969, van 5 t/m 9 Januari 1970, van 2 t/m 6 Februari 1970, van 2 t/m 6 Maart 1970 en van 27 t/m 29 April 1970, te Utrecht op 19 Juni 1970 en te Sneek van 2 t/m 5 November 1970* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, n.d.), 162-165.

³⁰¹ J. Plomp, *Een Kerk in Beweging: De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland na de Tweede Wereldoorlog*, 33.

³⁰² Cf. A. van Egmond, 'Uiterst Barmhartigheid: Uitgangspunt, Inhoud en Criterium van Berkouwer's Theologie', 117. To see the description of Berkouwer's involvement with the Council as an observer, take a look at Dirk van Keulen, "G. C. Berkouwer and the Council", 20-23.

³⁰³ Eduardo Echeverria, *Berkouwer and Catholicism*, 24.

³⁰⁴ G. W. de Jong, *De Theologie van Dr. G. C. Berkouwer*, 52, 57.

'He [Berkouwer] insisted, however, that one had to remain realistic: "One can be certain that, even if the Council were to pronounce on doctrine (which is by no means assured), it will not be a retreating movement, no self-criticism, but at most more detailed interpretations, explanation of what the church meant by its (infallible) doctrinal pronouncements...It is unrealistic to think that this Council represents a crisis for Rome's self-concept (as the church of the Lord). Nothing points in that direction and, above all, one must not embark on ecumenical annexation". But it did not mean that a great deal might not come of it: "it becomes a serious matter in church history when everything is looked at anew with conscious clarity"''.³⁰⁵

In *Vatikaans Concilie en Nieuwe Theologie*, Berkouwer discusses the new theology in association with the Council by focussing on several ecclesiological topics of interest. When he highlights the ecumenical zeal of John XXIII in his encyclicals *Ad Petri Cathedram* (1959), *Aeterna Dei Sapientia* (1961), and his first address in the Council *Gaudet Mater Ecclesia* (1962), Berkouwer notes the distinct accent from the pope on repentance in connection with the reunion with the separate brethren, signifying the connection between the internal and the external matters of the Church.³⁰⁶ Additionally, Berkouwer underlines the presence of the new thinking in the papal opening address, which embraces the distinction between the unchangeability of the truth of the Church and the formation of the truth, which requires responsible work in new contexts.³⁰⁷ Granting the possibility of the emergence of unexpected conclusions from the Council, Berkouwer still inquires if a genuine ecumenical dialogue is even possible when the Roman Catholic *a priori* self-understanding as the only true Church persists.³⁰⁸ Nevertheless, he rejects the mere repetition of anti-Catholicism from the Protestant circle since such antithesis only results in fruitlessness.

During the Council, as for the subject of the unchangeability of dogmas and the changeability of forms of their expressions, Berkouwer observes that a real determinant of the possible impact of the new theology on the Catholic thoughts is whether the transparent differentiation could be established between itself and the modernistic strand of thinking.³⁰⁹ Also, in virtue of the anti-scholastic proclivity of the new theology, he intimates the ecumenical possibility between Rome and Reformation, which is backed by his assessment that the new theology deserves to be called a genuine voice of Catholicism for its clear adherence to the entirety of the teaching of Rome.³¹⁰ After the Council, Berkouwer takes note of the clear indication of the changing context in the horizon of knowledge and emerging questions in which the Church should live as the faithful witness of the single gospel in the Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*. The new theology stands with this as it intimates the concrete guidance of the Holy Spirit within the reality of the gospel for all times and all people ('de *virtualiteit* van het evangelie voor alle tijden en alle mensen').³¹¹ However, he critically indicates that the encyclical by Paul VI *Mysterium Fidei*, which was published before *Gaudium et Spes*, pinpoints the pope's adherence to the understanding of the continuity or unchangeability of

³⁰⁵ Dirk van Keulen, "G. C. Berkouwer and the Council", 19-20.

³⁰⁶ G. C. Berkouwer, *Vatikaans Concilie en Nieuwe Theologie* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1964), 8. Meanwhile, Berkouwer accentuates the intricate character of the interconnection between the unchangeable oneness of the Church and the guilt of individuals in the conditional admission of guilt, as exemplified in the use of the term "if" by the pope Paul VI in 1964 when he spoke of the guilt on the Roman Catholic side (Berkouwer, *Vatikaans Concilie en Nieuwe Theologie*, 54.).

³⁰⁷ Berkouwer, *Vatikaans Concilie*, 18-22. See also, Eduardo Echeverria, *Berkouwer and Catholicism*, 23.

³⁰⁸ Berkouwer, *Vatikaans Concilie*, 26-27.

³⁰⁹ Berkouwer, *Vatikaans Concilie*, 82-83.

³¹⁰ Berkouwer, *Vatikaans Concilie*, 100-101.

³¹¹ G. C. Berkouwer, *Nabetrachting op het Concilie* (Kampen: Kok, 1968), 76.

dogma—in this case that of eucharist—in terms of the conservation of both its content and form, which does not coincide with John XXIII's remark at the beginning of the Council.³¹²

As concerns the office of the Church, Berkouwer notifies in the middle of the Council the connection between the emergent view of the Church at the Council as "communion" and "mystery" as well as the increased attention to the synthesis of historical and spiritual nature of the apostolic succession of the pope and bishops. The authority of the episcopates was recognised as complete and total, in distinction from the absolute authority of the pope at the First Vatican Council. What Berkouwer seems to find remarkable is the definite shift of accent to the serving and witnessing function of the office—expressed with the conviction that the succession of the witnessing of the gospel and the Word is nothing other than the core of apostolic succession—grounded in the mandate of the gospel.³¹³ Nonetheless, after the Council, Berkouwer elucidates that, in spite of the wish of many for the new towards the fresh consideration of the relation between the college of bishops and the pope and between the authority of the ecumenical Council and the papal authority, his impression of the phrases in *nota praevia explicativa* in *Lumen Gentium* and the Constitution itself is that they are written more in favour of papalism.³¹⁴ Berkouwer regards this formal *a priori* authority of the pope as lacking the motives of the Reformation that revolve round the concreteness and visibility of the normed *Gegenüber* over against the self-evidence of the authority of the office.³¹⁵ The *a priori* approach to the papal authority does not seem to convince many of its credibility and trustworthiness. The growing consideration of the humanness of the popes in their decision-making and the evangelical credibility of the authority of the office in a sense of the truly liberating power of the gospel are the kind of authority that flows from the liberating authority of the Lord through the gospel, which would reflect the heart of the Shepherd.³¹⁶ Berkouwer enquires at this point how this guarantee plays out concretely in the Church, insofar as many Catholics nowadays, instead of the charismatic and automatic guaranteeing of the Holy Spirit, see the assistance of the Spirit for the Church alongside the serious work of the biblical studies.³¹⁷ It indicates the inclination from the side of the biblical research against dogmatic traditionalism where the Scripture merely upholds the pre-existent and self-evident dogmas instead of being the ground for dogmas.³¹⁸ Berkouwer assessed afterwards that, in the Constitution *Dei Verbum*, the weight formerly endowed on the tradition in relation to the Scripture still persists, even in its expression "*non supra Verbum*", rather than affirming the sole normativity of the Scripture.³¹⁹ On the other hand, the Constitution sheds light on the centrality of the witness of the Scripture—the gospel of salvation—and the formal inspiration theory of inerrancy "*sine ullo errore*" in terms of exactness expressed by Pius XII in *Divino Afflante Spiritu* is substituted by "*sine errore*", which is characterised by the sense of trustworthiness and firmness in view of the scope of salvation in the truth and grace of God in Jesus Christ. Berkouwer notices here the influence of the biblical research in the Catholic circle, which, holding on to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, does not disregard the involvement of the human factors of the Scripture.³²⁰

³¹² Berkouwer, *Nabetrachting op het Concilie*, 44-45, 56-57, 72-74.

³¹³ Berkouwer, *Vatikaans Concilie*, 177-216.

³¹⁴ Berkouwer, *Nabetrachting*, 142-146, 146-151.

³¹⁵ Berkouwer, *Nabetrachting*, 153-154.

³¹⁶ Berkouwer, *Nabetrachting*, 177-190.

³¹⁷ Berkouwer, *Vatikaans Concilie*, 169-170, 174-175.

³¹⁸ Berkouwer, *Nabetrachting*, 129-132.

³¹⁹ Berkouwer, *Nabetrachting*, 118-120.

³²⁰ Berkouwer, *Nabetrachting*, 136-140

In addition, Berkouwer discusses the peculiar ecclesiological conviction of the Roman Catholic Church, along with the fresh insight from the new thinking, which functions as a backbone for other crucial parts of ecumenical concern between Rome and the Reformation.³²¹ Berkouwer captions the shift of accent on Rome's ecclesiological self-identification at the Council without defying the existent organisational understanding of the Church—the Roman Catholic Church identified as the body of Christ—as strongly pronounced in the papal encyclical *Mystici Corporis Christi* (1943) as well as *Humani Generis* (1950) by Pius XII.³²² The shift of accent takes place in company with the rise of the concept "the Church as the people of God" in which the institutional Church is illustrated alongside its historical and concrete reality as pilgrims on the way to the eschaton.³²³ Berkouwer sees the anti-triumphalistic slant in this attempt, and yet, simultaneously, this new input in no way deletes the *a priori* wealth and security of the Church as the body of Christ from the eschatological perspective as well as Rome's exclusive self-identification with the body of Christ.³²⁴ After the Council, Berkouwer examines *Lumen Gentium* and *Unitatis Redintegratio*. The distinct underlining goes to the new emphasis on the pneumatological aspect of the Church together with the primary identification of the Church as the people of God, which entails the complementary view of the institutional and communal facet of the Church. He assesses that this perspective stresses the subjective dimension of the faith in Christ and the Holy Spirit by underscoring the critical significance of the heart and perseverance instead of the self-evidence of membership for salvation. Rome's persistent self-understanding of its own institutional fullness buttressed by the nature of its givenness through the will of Christ, at the same time, influences its terminology for other churches as the other recognised "brethren".³²⁵ Here, Berkouwer observes difficulties in the Catholic ecumenism for its self-understanding characterised by the given fullness, perfect society and hierarchy according to the will of the Lord.³²⁶

Also, in relation to the matter of the ecclesial reality of other churches, Berkouwer underscores the concept of the hierarchy of truths, which Berkouwer sees as performing an evangelical criticism on the understanding of "the important" and "the unimportant", e.g. the "centre" question. The centrality and scope of the gospel of Jesus Christ is set forth here, as the evangelical concentration directs to the perspective of fullness and catholicity, which relies on the fullness of Christ and his grace.³²⁷ Early on, Berkouwer explains in *Vatikaans Concilie en Nieuwe Theologie* that the singleness of the gospel is the very reason why a simplistic kind of ecumenism that levels out the real divergences in a way towards relativistic

³²¹ Cf. G. W. de Jong, *De Theologie van Dr. G. C. Berkouwer*, 58.

³²² Berkouwer, *Vatikaans Concilie*, 220.

³²³ Berkouwer, *Vatikaans Concilie*, 221-222.

³²⁴ Berkouwer, *Vatikaans Concilie*, 223-224, 253-257. Berkouwer sees the perpetuation of the distinction between the Church and the members after the Council (Berkouwer, *Nabetrachting*, 30-34.). In light of ecumenical progress, he calls for the admission of the guilt of the Church, not just individuals: 'Betekenis zal dan ook de schuldbelijdenis slechts hebben, wanneer er maar niet mee bedoeld wordt een schuld in het persoonlijk en individueel aspect...maar ook verstaan wordt, hoezeer bij de verduistering der waarheid en de vermindering van het in de waarheid wandelen de schuld der kerk belemmerend werkt op de weg naar de eenheid der kerk (Berkouwer, *Vatikaans Concilie*, 54-55.)'.

³²⁵ Berkouwer, *Nabetrachting*, 85-94.

³²⁶ 'Het concilie heeft op tastende wijze zich er voor gehoeid, de identiteit als simpele en strikte identiteit te fixeren...In dat licht kan men zeggen, dat de Consitutie over de kerk niet prijsgeeft haar ecclesiologisch inzicht, dat de belangrijkheid van de zichtbaarheid der "societa hierarchica" accentueert, maar tegelijkertijd op een nieuwe wijze ruimte laat voor het kritisch nuancerings-aspect in de ecclesia en daardoor met andere ogen uitziend naar de vele gaven...die uit Christus en uit de Geest zijn en naar de communio-relatie, die voor de kerk wezenlijk moet worden geacht (Berkouwer, *Nabetrachting*, 93.)'. For this reason, Berkouwer refuses to draw a quick conclusion out of Rome's self-understanding of fullness without considering their recognition of other churches seriously (Berkouwer, *Nabetrachting*, 93.).

³²⁷ Berkouwer, *Nabetrachting*, 104-111.

harmonisation cannot be regarded acceptable.³²⁸ Searching for the true unity of the Church is founded on the unity of the gospel of the cross of Christ.³²⁹ This perspective cannot be faded out owing to the newly emerging problems and questions that tend to divide the conservatives and the progressives, both of whom cannot claim to be free from perversion and degeneration.³³⁰ Rather, 'the questions put to the Church from the outside force the Church to ask the basic question of its listening to and preaching of the gospel', while at the same time, 'the divisions of the Church are forcing the churches to get at the root questions of their existence and task'.³³¹ The search for unity goes together with the search for truth, as Jesus' prayer in John 17 prays that 'the Church may be kept from the Evil One'.³³² In this vein, Berkouwer appears to agree with Congar's ecumenical realism, and he adds simultaneously that it does not signify ecumenical fatalism but opens a door for 'the possibility of surprises' because of the very 'mystery of the Church'.³³³

In *Vatikaans Concilie en Nieuwe Theologie*, Berkouwer makes known his perspective on the mystery of the Church as correlative mystery, which takes on the anti-triumphalistic and concrete view of the Church and, at the same time, gets across the mystery of the promise of God in correlation with the faith of the people of God. Compared to the Roman Catholic Church, the Reformation embraced the indefectibility of the Church with a distinct kind of correlation, as Berkouwer says:

'We have seen that the Roman Catholic stress on the indefectibility of the Church refers to the one Roman Church in its actual historical form...in Reformed theology...the Church's continuity is correlative to its own faith and obedience and to its will to abide in the Lord. We are kept from thinking of the guarantee given to the Church in abstraction from the correlative connections that make up the mystery of the Church. Christ is present in the Church, but in the Church that is *gathered in His name* (Matthew 18:10; 28:20), that keeps His commands (John 15:10), and that listens to His Word (John 14:23)...It is equally correct to speak of the Church being preserved as it is to speak of the Church preserving itself. To speak of the Church being built and to speak of the Church building itself are both truth and both necessary...The Church *must* remain true. God remains true. These two facts are bound together in a living correlativity, and it is only in such a

³²⁸ Berkouwer, *Vatikaans Concilie*, 320-321. Berkouwer regards that a relativistic approach employs hermeneutics as 'a magicians wand that can solve all problems' and a negative consequence is the confusion of the unity itself for the absence of one understanding of the exact points of agreement (G. C. Berkouwer, *The Second Vatican Council and the New Catholicism*, trans. by Lewis B. Smedes (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 250, *Vatikaans Concilie*, 317.).

³²⁹ Berkouwer, *Vatikaans Concilie*, 321, 325-326.

³³⁰ Berkouwer refers to the confessionalism and traditionalism that practically identifies the school of theology ('de school der theologie') with the gospel itself and does not have the testing and power of the gospel in new forms. He deems that this kind of conservatism does not really answer new questions, as all these are already answered once and for all time ('omdat alle vragen reeds beantwoord zijn'). On the other hand, Berkouwer criticises the subjectivistic progressivism as the critical power of the gospel ('de *kritische* kracht van het evangelie') is not sufficiently upheld so as for the blessing of the gospel ('de zegen van het evangelie') to be snatched away in all of the eagerness to openness, autonomy and resistances. He constantly emphasises the responsible engagement with the contemporary questions and the submission to the critical testing of the single gospel of Jesus Christ in the midst of the concrete living in the new time (Berkouwer, *Vatikaans Concilie*, 323-324.).

³³¹ In this strand of thinking, Berkouwer invalidates the dualistic conception of coping with the common challenges ('de gemeenschappelijke confrontatie') and the significance of the divergences (Berkouwer, *The Second Vatican Council*, 253, *Vatikaans Concilie*, 320, 322.).

³³² Berkouwer, *The Second Vatican Council*, 250, *Vatikaans Concilie*, 316. See also, Eduardo Echeverria, *Berkouwer and Catholicism*, 41.

³³³ Berkouwer, *The Second Vatican Council*, 250, *Vatikaans Concilie*, 317.

correlative situation that the Church is assured of its continuity. This kind of continuity is unique, *sui generis*; it has no real parallel anywhere'.³³⁴

It calls for the correlative and concrete character of the mystery of the continuity, which a static self-affirmation of the attributes—one, holy, catholic, and apostolic—on the basis of self-evident verifiability cannot represent. The meaningfulness of speaking of the attributes can only be attained to when the Church in concreteness 'really does reflect its Lord',³³⁵ and Berkouwer notes the serious voice of anti-triumphalism in the Catholic circle, which rejects the automated self-evidence of the attributes.³³⁶ The emphasis on concreteness purports the refutation of the avoidance of the testing of the gospel either by making ontological division between the Church and the members or by escaping into the idealised invisible Church.³³⁷ The mystery of the continuity concretely involves, in its testing by the gospel with the accompaniment of the outlook on the eschatological judgment to which the Church will be the first to be subjected, the response of faith and obedience of the Church in its entirety and humanness including its offices and entire existence.³³⁸

3.2. Berkouwer's Work on Ecclesiology in *De Kerk I&II*

3.2.1. Correlation

It is generally accepted that Berkouwer, after he 'succeeded Hepp on the chair of dogmatics', started giving a substantive signification to the term "correlation" in distinction from his early time before 1945 when he mainly used it as a measuring rod for the analysis of the other theologians.³³⁹ After noting that, as shown in Berkouwer's dissertation, there was already a significant interest in the relationship between the divine revelation and the human faith, van der Kooi gives an account that, in his *Dogmatische Studiën* whose first volumes on faith and justification, sanctification, and perseverance appeared in 1949, his "correlation" fructifies in his own way of reflection on the contents of the faith.³⁴⁰ Veenhof adds that Berkouwer's former apologetic proclivity was replaced by the capacity of listening ('het vermogen tot luisteren') as well as that of a dialogue as to the deepest intention of his dialogue partners ('een gesprek over de diepste intenties van de gesprekspartners').³⁴¹ It means that his principle of correlation did not lose its way due to his concern for listening and fair understanding of others.

Van Keulen comments that, by applying the principle of correlation in his theological thinking, Berkouwer attempts to transcend the extremes of both objectivistic and subjectivistic tendency in theologising.³⁴² A subjectivistic approach to the revelation of God

³³⁴ Berkouwer, *The Second Vatican Council*, 209, *Vatikaans Concilie*, 258-259.

³³⁵ Berkouwer, *The Second Vatican Council*, 217-218, *Vatikaans Concilie*, 270.

³³⁶ Berkouwer, *Vatikaans Concilie*, 267-268.

³³⁷ Berkouwer, *Vatikaans Concilie*, 260-261.

³³⁸ Berkouwer, *Vatikaans Concilie*, 261-262.

³³⁹ J. C. De Moor, *Towards a Biblically Theo-logical Method: A Structural Analysis and a Further Elaboration of Dr. G. C. Berkouwer's Hermeneutic-Dogmatic Method* (Kampen: Kok, 1980), 230-231. See also, Dirk van Keulen, 'G. C. Berkouwer's Principle of Correlation: An Attempt to Comprehend', *Journal of Reformed Theology* 4 (2010), 98-99. Van der Kooi remarks that Berkouwer broke with the scholastic manner of theologising adopted by his predecessor (C. van der Kooi, "Berkouwer, Gerrit Cornelis", 52-53.).

³⁴⁰ C. van der Kooi, "Berkouwer, Gerrit Cornelis", 53.

³⁴¹ J. Veenhof, "Geschiedenis van Theologie en Spiritualiteit in de Gereformeerde Kerken", 58.

³⁴² Van Keulen provides three examples: faith and justification, divine election, and eschatology (Dirk van Keulen, 'G. C. Berkouwer's Principle of Correlation: An Attempt to Comprehend', 100-102, 104.). Berkouwer did not give

would make the revelation in its substance, meaning, and motif dependent on the human subject. Objectivism, on the other hand, sets the revelation of God completely outside the human subject in a way that the faith-response becomes irrelevant and the revelation loses its appealing character and turns into an absolutised and objectified set of data.³⁴³ God's revelation is correlative in a sense that it, in its primary and normative objectivity, addresses and appeals to the faith of the human subject. As Berkouwer's teaching on faith and justification instructs, the faith as the gift of the Holy Spirit can only be hinted at through the complete and existential recognition of the exclusion of the self-worthiness or self-sufficiency before God, 'the total humiliation in confession of guilt and sorrow for sin', and 'the obedience of faith'.³⁴⁴ The word "existential" here has the important connotation of the faith's involvement of the concrete human being in his/her existence before the Holy One. For this reason, Berkouwer would claim:

'... Faith does not place a man before a certain number of accepted truths which he intellectually assents to; faith thrusts him, as a sinner, before God's holiness. He does not try to escape judgment by means of faith; in faith he accepts the justness of the judgment. Thus, faith is bound inseparably to repentance; and meritorious worth is ostracised as much from the realm of penitence as from that of faith... The marvellous fact is... *the way of salvation is the way of faith just because it is only in faith that the exclusiveness of divine grace is recognised and honoured*. This is not perspicuous to the reason, but it is to him [who takes hold of divine grace in the act of faith]'.³⁴⁵

In this relation, Berkouwer speaks about the mystery of correlation between faith and justification that the faith is real and concrete, and it can in no way be translated into a ghostly thing or something hidden in the cloud. At the same time, a human effort to grasp the faith as if it is proportionately understandable in relation to the sovereign grace of God or it is something that stands by itself and affirms itself is bound to fail to comprehend the mystery of faith-correlation of salvation. *Sola fide* and *Sola gratia* can only be truly made apparent when the faith-correlation of salvation actually enfolds 'the reality of human existence'.³⁴⁶ Therefore, the peculiarity of the faith, which can only speak of the self-denial, repentance, obedience and the full grace of God through the Holy Spirit, can only be approached in its correlative nature in the truthful proclamation of the sovereign grace of God and 'the earnestness of the call to faith'. It is because there 'lies the real mystery of the way of salvation'.³⁴⁷

The faith-correlation of justification, therefore, by no means indicates the annulment of the harmonious relation between faith and work. His discussion of the Book of James in harmony with Paul's letters with particular concern on the relationship between faith and work is a good example. He exclaims that what James enunciates is that the empty faith is not the true

a clean-cut definition of the term "correlation". Van Keulen considers that the lack of qualification of the concept is a cause of misunderstandings, and proposes to add "theonomous" to "correlation" in order to uphold the theological intention of the Dutch theologian (Dirk van Keulen, 'G. C. Berkouwer's Principle of Correlation: An Attempt to Comprehend', 111.).

³⁴³ Cf. C. van der Kooi, "Berkouwer, Gerrit Cornelis", 54.

³⁴⁴ G. C. Berkouwer, *Faith and Justification*, trans. by John Vriend (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1952), 180-183, 189-195, *Geloof en Rechtvaardiging* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1949), 189-193, 200-206. Berkouwer further explains the nature of correlation in justification: 'Elders hebben we gehandeld over de correlatie tussen geloof en rechtvaardiging. Daarin ging het niet om wederzijdse afhankelijkheid, maar om de gelovige aanvaarding van de rechtvaardiging... Het geloof, dat zich op de verzoening richt, weet, dat hierin niet een verdienstelijke daad wordt verricht, maar juist al onze onverdienstelijkheid overkoepeld wordt door de *verzoening* (G. C. Berkouwer, *Het Werk van Christus* (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1953), 323.)'.

³⁴⁵ Berkouwer, *Faith and Justification*, 183, 188-189, *Geloof en Rechtvaardiging*, 193, 199.

³⁴⁶ Berkouwer, *Faith and Justification*, 179, *Geloof en Rechtvaardiging*, 187.

³⁴⁷ Berkouwer, *Faith and Justification*, 199, *Geloof en Rechtvaardiging*, 213-214.

faith, which is 'not dead, empty, or fruitless', but 'a real, existential trust' adhering to grace and standing 'in the freedom of Christ'.³⁴⁸ The empty faith is abstracted from the correlation that is never separated from the existential and personal reality of the subject.³⁴⁹ The sheer closeness of relation that the faith has with works should be underscored as demonstrated in Paul's exclamation that 'all which is not of faith is sin (Rom. 14:23)'.³⁵⁰

This is why the subject of sanctification itself is not a concern of mere work of theorisation, but deals with the concreteness of the real life, the life of faith.³⁵¹ The sanctification is the will of God for His people, and there is a continuity of the Christian imperative with the calling of Israel to holiness.³⁵² This sanctification can only be spoken of in a true sense when the harmonious 'bond between *Sola fide* and sanctification' is genuinely understood.³⁵³ The nature of faith itself, which echoes the sovereign grace of God with 'the sense of unworthiness' that is 'a humility induced by divine grace', distinctly leads to the understanding that sanctification is an 'increased immersion in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ' and its subsequence is the deepening of the 'sense of unworthiness'.³⁵⁴ Berkouwer explicates:

'The work of the Holy Spirit in man must always be tied in with the orientation of man's faith to divine grace—an orientation which is effected by the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of the work of the Holy Spirit is designed precisely to prevent us from viewing man as an independent, dynamistic unit. This doctrine does not make man self-sufficient but rather underlines his perpetual and inherent lack of self-sufficiency'.³⁵⁵

Accordingly, Berkouwer puts forth that only in the full acknowledgement of and the origination from the redeeming grace in Christ, there can be a manifestation of the true meaning of *imitatio Christi*, which Berkouwer perceives is not one of many forms of sanctification but its essential description.³⁵⁶ The danger of moralism that stresses imitating and copying the life and acts of Christ on earth is addressed, and the emphasis on obedience in many cases comes forth because of the fear of moralism in *imitatio Christi*. However, such a choice also depletes the full significance of the revelation of the New Testament and might lead to a legalistic manifestation of obedience, even despite not overlooking the atonement.³⁵⁷ It is rather that '*in the imitation is the believing obedience*' ('*in de navolging is de gelovige gehoorzaam*').³⁵⁸ The communion with Christ is that into which the believers are called, and

³⁴⁸ Berkouwer, *Faith and Justification*, 133-134, 138, *Geloof en Rechtvaardiging*, 139-140.

³⁴⁹ 'Een felle en scherpe wending valt in Jacobus' waarschuwend woord te ontdekken: een vergelijking met demonisch geloof. Het geïsoleerde, onvruchtbare geloof wordt fel belicht door de verwijzing naar de demonen, die allerminst atheïst zijn, maar gelóven en niet twijfelen. Ieder moet dan wel verstaan, welke twijfelachtige waarde *dit* "geloof" bezit. *Dit* "alleen-maar geloven" is waarlijk iets anders dan het Paulinische "door het geloof alleen"! Want *dit geloven* staat existentieel los van z'n voorwerp. De diepte der persoonlijke correlatie ontbreekt (Berkouwer, *Geloof en Rechtvaardiging*, 135.)'.

³⁵⁰ Berkouwer, *Faith and Justification*, 108, *Geloof en Rechtvaardiging*, 106.)

³⁵¹ G. C. Berkouwer, *Geloof en Heiliging* (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1949), 5, 14.

³⁵² Berkouwer, *Geloof en Heiliging*, 17-20.

³⁵³ G. C. Berkouwer, *Faith and Sanctification*, trans. by John Vriend (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952), 42, *Geloof en Heiliging*, 39-40. 'Nimmer zal men over de heiliging mogen spreken, alsof men hier—na door de "poort" der rechtvaardiging te zijn gegaan—een zelfstandig krachtenveld betreedt, waarop de heiliging vanuit de eenmaal aanwezige dynamische impulsen tot stand komt. Wel is er ook bij de heiliging van de "dynamis" van de Heilige Geest sprake, maar men zal deze nimmer los mogen maken van het geloof. Dat is het, wat we uit alle reformatorische getuigenissen duidelijk kunnen horen (Berkouwer, *Geloof en Heiliging*, 40.)'.

³⁵⁴ Berkouwer, *Faith and Sanctification*, 129, *Geloof en Heiliging*, 132.

³⁵⁵ Berkouwer, *Faith and Sanctification*, 83, *Geloof en Heiliging*, 80.

³⁵⁶ Berkouwer, *Geloof en Heiliging*, 136.

³⁵⁷ Berkouwer, *Faith and Sanctification*, 144-145, *Geloof en Heiliging*, 147-148.

³⁵⁸ Berkouwer, *Geloof en Heiliging*, 147.

where Christ's imperative of *imitatio*, as demonstrated in the scene where he washed the feet of his disciples, is preceded and founded by the grace of redemption, reconciliation, and purification.³⁵⁹ It is the reason why, as far as *imitatio Christi* is concerned, the inseparable relation 'between receiving mercy and being merciful, between forgiveness and readiness to forgive' should be firmly established.³⁶⁰ *Imitatio Christi* is the conformity to the mind of Christ in actual living flowing from the union with Christ, as expressed by Paul in words 'being crucified, dead, buried, and risen with Christ'.³⁶¹ Berkouwer explains:

'According to the testimony of the entire New Testament, the imitation of Christ is founded on the Atonement. There is absolutely no tension between being reminded of the past (the Atonement) and pressing to the future... The Atonement and the imitation of Christ are related as a spring to a well and this true imitation of Christ may and must be a leitmotif in the preaching of the church: preaching based on the premise that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself (2 Cor. 5:19)... Conformity to Christ does not consist in isolated human love but in a love which flows from the cross of Atonement upon which God made publicly manifest both his love and his justice'.³⁶²

Now, pertaining to the perseverance of saints, Berkouwer argues that it is also to be observed in its faith-correlation—*sola fide* and *sola gratia*—and any rationalistic speculation would fail to bring into full light the depth of correlative reality of the gospel of salvation and faithfulness of God in the dynamics of the believers' concrete living under the promise and the admonition.³⁶³ Berkouwer rejects *a priori* way of speculation on perseverance by way of logical inference from the predetermined *ordo salutis*, since it shifts the locus of perseverance from the concrete arena of faith "on the way" to mere logical reasoning.³⁶⁴ Berkouwer expounds the inseparability of the faithfulness of God and the seriousness of admonition thrown at believers:

'God's favour, which is more enduring than the hills, is not something from which we can logically deduce all sorts of rest-giving conclusions. Such a treatment of the everlasting grace of God is made impossible by the nature of God's grace – free, unexpected, and unmerited... It is correlated, rather, with faith, which faces this unexpected grace in amazement, thankfulness, and worship... the subject-side of the correlation is never made independent; in admonishing faith and perseverance in faith, the Scriptures always hold in view all the fullness and the riches of salvation.

³⁵⁹ Berkouwer, *Faith and Sanctification*, 147-149, *Geloof en Heiliging*, 152-154.

³⁶⁰ Berkouwer, *Faith and Sanctification*, 149, *Geloof en Heiliging*, 154-155.

³⁶¹ Berkouwer, *Faith and Sanctification*, 158, *Geloof en Heiliging*, 167. 'Juist het zijn in Christus en het met Hem gestorven en begraven zijn is voor Paulus de rijkdom van de gerechtigheid door het geloof en daarom is in *deze* gelijkvormigheid een weg zichtbaar geworden, waarin de gelovigen ten diepste nog maar één ding hebben te doen: uit deze rijkdom te leven en dus niet gelijkvorming te worden aan het "schema" dezer wereld (Berkouwer, *Geloof en Heiliging*, 167.)'.

³⁶² Berkouwer, *Faith and Sanctification*, 159, *Geloof en Heiliging*, 168-169.

³⁶³ G. C. Berkouwer, *Geloof en Volharding* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1949), 95.

³⁶⁴ Berkouwer, *Geloof en Volharding*, 70-71. Berkouwer's critique on replacing the path of faith by the path of sight is also found in his critique on theodicy: '...rechtvaardiging van God...aan de menselijke rede was...het laatste woord en Gods rechtvaardigheid werd...in hoogmoed geloofend. In de theodicee gaat het niet om deze bewuste rebellie, maar wel wil men *uitgaan* van de wereld der *ervaringsfeiten* ten einde langs de weg der redelijke analyse en argumentatie tot de conclusie te komen en te leiden, dat deze ervaringswerkelijkheid *niet* in strijd is met de rechtvaardigheid Gods (G. C. Berkouwer, *De Voorzienigheid Gods* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1950), 296.)'. The main issue Berkouwer has with theodicy is, despite his recognition of the apologetic intention, the way in which the reality is approached and interpreted, in a sense that it is not done through the revelation and faith, but proceeds with the searched-for neutralised, unbiased, common and independent ground from which the empirical reality is explained and the righteousness of God is produced through the work of isolated human thought (*De Voorzienigheid Gods*, 297-300.). Basically, Berkouwer argues that theodicy, as an apologetic effort, should start from the faith, not from the uncertainty and doubt (*De Voorzienigheid Gods*, 304.).

This being so, we must conclude that the admonition flows out directly from the preaching of the gospel of salvation'.³⁶⁵

What is prominent here is the correlation between *sola fide* and *sola gratia*, as the faith is directed towards God only and does not dare to try to take up the baton of contribution for perseverance. This is the reason why the perseverance—in the context of radical admonition about remaining in the path of salvation of and fellowship with God and the concreteness of the reality of *militia Christiana*—is never dependent on the saints, which would be a consequence from a rationalistic approach.³⁶⁶ Hence, 'the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints will always be a doxology to God's preservation'.³⁶⁷

Berkouwer's anti-speculative approach keeps its essential character of the faith-correlation in his works of *Dogmatische Studiën*. The correlation in Berkouwer's works is not an attempt to establish an existentialist theology as if the revelation of God is determined, confined, and reduced by the subjectivity of human faith.³⁶⁸ It is not a mere effort in balancing out between objectivism and subjectivism, just as any attempt at finding the middle ground against the background where there are two extreme poles to be moderated. It does not also indicate the interdependence of question-and-answer correlation, as shown not only in Tillich but also in Bultmann, which Berkouwer strongly rejects as being in danger of subjectivism.³⁶⁹ He points out that, when the question from the subject becomes the dominating factor of exegesis and the recognition of the authority of the Scripture, the structure of correlation ('de structuur der correlatie') is to be subjected to all kinds of subjectivism.³⁷⁰ It is the case even if one argues that the question from the existence cannot be 'the source for the revelatory answer formulated by theology', as Tillich states, because of the flipside of such interdependency that puts forth simultaneously the impossibility and inadequacy of drawing 'the question implied

³⁶⁵ G. C. Berkouwer, *Faith and Perseverance*, trans. by Robert D. Knudsen (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1958), 97-98, *Geloof en Volharding*, 86-87.

³⁶⁶ Berkouwer, *Faith and Perseverance*, 110, *Geloof en Volharding*, 99. Berkouwer says: 'Het geloof verstaat het Verbond. Het ziet het Verbond niet als een leeg en inhoudsloos schema, dat dan door geloof en ongelooft moet worden gevuld. Maar het hóórt het Woord der genade en weet, dat de beslissing niet ligt in onze beslissing, maar dat onze beslissing slechts de Zijne erkent, vol van genade (Berkouwer, *Geloof en Volharding*, 191.)'.

³⁶⁷ Berkouwer, *Faith and Perseverance*, 123, *Geloof en Volharding*, 111. For Berkouwer, the perseverance of saints is never a self-evident matter established through logical deduction, as such an approach takes place outside the faith. The prayers and plead, confessing sins and rejoicing, expressing trust and confessing weakness, and so forth depict the profundity of the perseverance in the life of *sola fide* directed towards *sola gratia*. This dynamic is explicitly displayed in Psalms, and this reality of the faith-correlation of the perseverance in its profound mystery can never be recognised by a pure intellectual work of deduction and rigorous systematisation (Berkouwer, *Geloof en Volharding*, 190-191.).

³⁶⁸ This was the main point of H. Berkhof's critique on Berkouwer's correlation principle, especially in regards to the third phase of his theology that Berkhof comprehends to be existentially drifted in the interpretation of the Scripture. Berkhof seriously inquired if Berkouwer is willing to reject the Bultmann's critical-sifting of what is allowable or not in accords with the existential interpretation. He thought that Berkouwer rigorously confines the oversight on God so much so that God Himself becomes too small (H. Berkhof, 'De Methode van Berkouwers Theologie', in *Ex Auditu Verbi. Theologische opstellen aangeboden aan Prof. dr. G.C. Berkouwer ter gelegenheid van zijn vijftienvigjarig ambtsjubileum als hoogleraar in de Faculteit der Godgeleerdheid van de Vrije Universiteit te Amsterdam* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1965), 48-53.). Berkouwer rejected Berkhof's interpretation of his theology, and expressed clearly that he was misunderstood, as he sees the correlation not as an existentialistic confinement, but a way of approaching God and His truth with a pure expression (G. C. Berkouwer, 'De Horizon', *GW* 21 (1965-1966), 174.). Also, Berkouwer voices that he refrains from using "existential" and prefers to use the phrase "human involvement" (menselijke betrokkenheid) (G. C. Berkouwer, 'Begrenzing?', *GW* 21 (1965-1966), 161. See also, Dirk van Keulen, *Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, 520-525.). Van Egmond employs the phrase *coram Deo* in his description of Berkouwer's correlative approach, and *coram Deo* involves the renouncement of speculation and the existential reality of faith before the face of God (A. van Egmond, 'Van Isolement naar Openheid: In Memoriam Prof.dr. G.C. Berkouwer (1903-1996)', *Woord en Dienst* 9 (1996), 13.).

³⁶⁹ G. C. Berkouwer, *De Heilige Schrift I* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1966), 165.

³⁷⁰ Berkouwer, *De Heilige Schrift I*, 164-165.

in existence from the revelatory answer'.³⁷¹ Berkouwer names Tillich's correlation as a *method* in that it, in accordance with its peculiarity of interdependency, governs the entire theological discourse. For the Dutch theologian, this approach is irreconcilable with the correlative discourse found in the Reformation theology, e.g. Melanchthon's anti-speculative and anti-scholastic wording of the benefit of Christ *pro nobis*.³⁷² The reformer talks about the true knowledge of Christ ('de ware kennis van Christus') over against the scholastics' disputations in which the gospel itself loses its light. The objectivity of the dogma is not lost in Melanchthon's *pro nobis* and *Christum cognoscere*,³⁷³ but his discourse pits itself against objectification through which the real benefit of the gospel of Jesus Christ *pro nobis* is lost sight of.³⁷⁴ This discussion goes back to the original point that the term "correlation" is not a magic spell (toverwoord) that would automate a correct discourse. Rather, in its terminological intent of portraying the uniqueness of the relationship, the nature of the subject matter indicates that everything relies upon the very question concerning the manner in which the relationship of the human subject to the revelation of God is to be spoken of.³⁷⁵

The correlation in Berkouwer's account seems to be a way of appreciating the mystery of the truth of God that cannot be assimilated to the result of mathematical calculation or the mere logical deduction from the pre-established *a priori*. Furthermore, it involves the human faith-response and is understood in the way of faith, which does not merely cover the rational part of the human being but the whole existence.³⁷⁶ Another unique aspect of the mystery of correlation is that the faith itself is not self-affirmative, but is the gift of the Holy Spirit and can only be directed towards the salvation in the gospel of Jesus Christ. The faith is correlated with terms such as "self-denial" or "obedience", and this designation confirms that, in Berkouwer's usage of the word "correlation", it is not intended that the faith would establish itself as one pole of the two as a synergistic view would do. "Correlation", instead, is a way of seeing the mystery of salvation revealed through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

³⁷¹ Berkouwer, *De Heilige Schrift I*, 165-165, ft. 155.

³⁷² Berkouwer, *De Heilige Schrift I*, 171. Another example is observed in Berkouwer's discourse on the doctrine of the Sacraments in the Reformation. He provides an example of the Lutheran confession: 'Duidelijk stellen de Lutherse confessies tegenover het "ex opere operato" *het gelovig gebruik* der sacramenten en men richt zich fel tegen de "fanatica opinio" met een beroep op de Schrift. "Promissio est inutilis, nisi fide accipiatur" (G. C. Berkouwer, 'Ex Opere Operato' I, *GTT* 53 (1953), 81.)'. He also indicates that Calvin's teaching on the Sacrament maintains the truth and the true objectivity of the Sacrament, referring to the correlation between the faith and the Sacrament: 'Vanuit de correlatie tussen geloof en sacrament zal men er voor bewaard kunnen blijven het sacrament te devalueren en tegelijkertijd het sacrament niet objectiveren (Berkouwer, 'Ex Opere Operato II', *GTT* 53 (1953), 102-103.)'. Van Egmond, in his agreement with Kuitert, does not characterise Berkouwer's correlation as a method in a strict sense ('geen echte methode'), but, instead, deploys the word "correlatiebegrip". He also reflects on the connection between the "correlatiebegrip" and Berkouwer's openness and readiness to listen to others with fairness and respect (A. van Egmond, 'Uiterst Barmhartigheid: Uitgangspunt, Inhoud en Criterium van Berkouwers Theologie', 125.).

³⁷³ "Christum cognoscere" comes from Berkouwer's citation of Melanchthon's *Loci Communes* "'Christum cognoscere est beneficia eius cognoscere, non eius naturas et modos incarnationis contueri" (Berkouwer, *De Heilige Schrift I*, 170, ft. 187. Italics not from the original source)'.

³⁷⁴ Berkouwer, *De Heilige Schrift I*, 171.

³⁷⁵ Berkouwer, *De Heilige Schrift I*, 164.

³⁷⁶ Berkouwer takes seriously the motif and the way of the Scriptural revelation, which a human inclination would possibly abuse, misinterpret and deform. A question concerning the number of the people who will be saved, as Luke 13:23 goes, is a kind that provokes human curiosity, which would much prefer a definite answer to every question. Such a striving for the definiteness of the answer can go either in the objectivistic and deterministic or in the subjectivistic and indeterministic direction, e.g. particularistic or universalistic determinism or subjectivistic indeterminism as regards the divine election (G. C. Berkouwer, *Verkiezing Gods*, (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1954), 261, 278-282.). Jesus' answer to the question regarding the number of the saved was "Strive to enter by the narrow gate (Luke 13:24) [ESV]", leaving the question unanswered in accordance with how the disciples desired (De Moor, *Towards A Biblically Theo-logical Method*, 326-327.).

In this vein, the true sort of correlation comprehends the biblical reality in its own theological reasoning that presents the objective reality in God and the subjective faith-response of human beings in harmony as a correlated reality, which entails both indicatives and imperatives and is also accompanied by and based on the fundamental motto of the Reformation—*Sola fide* and *Sola Scriptura* in *Tota Scriptura*.³⁷⁷ Berkouwer's constant criticism on mainly two ways of unbiblical theologising—dogmatic absolutism by means of speculative abstraction and existentialistic subjectivism without regard to the objective truth of revelation—refers pointedly to the motif of the Reformation, which reflected a genuine attempt to listen and submit to the Word in its own motif centred round the gospel of Jesus Christ over against mere traditionalism and speculative theologies.³⁷⁸

Another significant and related feature of Berkouwer's approach has to do with the main areas of his interest, which, as van der Kooi depicts, are located in the themes that were regarded crucial in the Reformation theology.³⁷⁹ Dogmatic studies are not an isolated business for intellectual elites but the business of and for the Church. Berkouwer gives a remark later on, which connotes the way in which he understands the relationship between theological works and the faith of the Church:

‘Dogma is a living reality within the house of God; here it sounds as the love song of the congregation. Concern for dogma is concern for faith. The task of theology is to help preserve the doxology of dogma. This is why unrest about dogma, concern for the faith that was once-for-all delivered, is the more unsettling when theology seems out of tune with the faith of the church. Reassuring people about the good intentions of theologians does not set them at rest; they know it is a matter of truth and not simply of good intent’.³⁸⁰

The once-and-for-all-ness of the faith of the church coheres with the singleness of the one, catholic, apostolic, and holy gospel of Jesus Christ. This is why theological studies that are isolated from the faith of the people of God are upsetting, and the theological isolation could take place in various forms. The sentence 'concern for dogma is concern for faith' above implicates especially the warning to dogmatic theology of lifting itself up and ruling over 'the "simple" "pre-scientific intuitive" faith of the church' as well as of forwarding a rigorous prescription on 'the way in which Christian believers are to work out their faith-conviction in other scientific disciplines'.³⁸¹ The former warning is in no way suggestive of

³⁷⁷ J. C. De Moor, *Towards A Biblically Theo-logical Method*, 281-283. Van der Kooi states in the same line: ‘De theol. vernieuwing bestaat er methodisch in dat de dogmatische bezinning nauwe aansluiting zoekt bij de bijbelse gegevens en hoofdlijnen van de Schrift en in de bezinning steeds de materiële, bevrijdende en appellerende inhoud van de Schrift voorop staat. Zodoende wordt er afscheid genomen van een methode waarin leerstellingen ondersteund worden door een veelheid van loca probantia en krijgt de bezinning op de bijbelse boodschap in haar totaliteit een veel zelfstandiger en kritischer plaats binnen de dogmatische reflectie dan bij B.s voorgangers mogelijk was. Nergens staan Woord of openbaring los van de gelovige of het antwoordend subject (C. van der Kooi, “Berkouwer, Gerrit Cornelis”, 52.)’

³⁷⁸ G. C. Berkouwer, *A Half Century of Theology: Movements and Motives* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 8. G. C. Berkouwer, *Een Halve Eeuw Theologie: Motieven en Stromingen van 1920 tot Heden* (Kampen: Kok, 1974), 6-7. See also, G. C. Berkouwer, *De Heilige Schrift II* (Kampen: Kok, 1967), 357-360. Cameron's emphasis on the submission of theological preferences ‘to the authority of the whole of Scripture’ resonates well with Berkouwer's viewpoint (Charles M. Cameron, *The Problem of Polarization: An Approach Based on the Writings of G. C. Berkouwer* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1992), 293.).

³⁷⁹ C. van der Kooi, “Berkouwer, Gerrit Cornelis”, 53.

³⁸⁰ Berkouwer, *A Half Century of Theology: Movements and Motives*, 216. G. C. Berkouwer, *Een Halve Eeuw Theologie: Motieven en Stromingen van 1920 tot Heden*, 313.

³⁸¹ De Moor, *Towards A Biblically Theo-logical Method*, 333. And yet, Berkouwer added, says De Moor, 'since the Word of God in the Christ of the Scriptures is normative for the deepest decisions of the human heart, the hermeneutical logic that Christians in other scientific disciplines employ should be in conformity with that of Scriptural revelation; it should not be based on a Scripturally unwarranted theoretical dialectic (De Moor, *Towards A Biblically Theo-logical Method*, 333)'.

phenomenological restriction of dogmas, and the latter part is by no means indicative of the plurality of the faith of the church. Berkouwer's evident point on the singleness of the gospel and the faith says otherwise, and the sentence about the concern for dogma intimates the way in which Berkouwer's theology is operated in the mystery of correlation.

3.2.2. Berkouwer's Discussion on Unity and Holiness of the Church

Berkouwer's discussion on the Church correlates with the basis of his thesis: the Church, which is composed of concrete and living human beings, namely *congregatio fidelium* and *communio sanctorum*, in ecclesiology, should be viewed in its actual and concrete reality. As "*credo ecclesiam*" it is directed to the reality of the Church in its mystery, which cannot be translated into something unhistorical or abstract.³⁸² A sort of static ecclesiology which lifts up the objectivistic and untouchable dogmatic description of the Church with the support of the attributes of the Church cannot be deemed sufficient.³⁸³ Berkouwer stresses, instead, the Reformation's criterion of the marks of the Church, *notae ecclesiae*, which, then, can be concentrated into one *nota*, namely the Word,³⁸⁴ together with the connoted emphasis that they 'imply a judgment, a testing of the Church'.³⁸⁵ The normativity of the Word of God determines the position of the Church "under" its authority, and the *notae* of the Church are found in a dynamic of critical examination of the visible and accessible Church for discerning its being *vera ecclesia*.³⁸⁶ Berkouwer argues thereby: 'Reflection on the Church may not and cannot consist in placid "contemplation" of her attributes, but only in a profound realization of the responsibility that is implicit in the *credo*'.³⁸⁷

Furthermore, Berkouwer states that, when it comes to the four attributes of the Church "one, catholic, apostolic and holy", any attempt at prioritising one particular dimension over others or isolating one from the entirety of the four poses dangers involved therein and cannot be considered justifiable and must be refuted.³⁸⁸ The whole scope of the four attributes of the Church should come through as the Church of Christ Jesus, in its concrete reality, is to be discussed in light of the Scripture.

3.2.2.1. Unity of the Church

For Berkouwer, the Church, in definition, is one and the concept of multiplicity is an impossibility.³⁸⁹ Disunity, which finds its origin in the sinfulness of humanity,³⁹⁰ has been

³⁸² The very fact that Berkouwer proceeds with his ecclesiological disquisition in the company of *credo* coincides with this in line with '*credo resurrectionem carnis*' as well as '*credo vitam aeternam*' (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I: Eenheid en Catholiciteit* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1970), 7-8.).

³⁸³ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I: Eenheid en Catholiciteit*, 10-12

³⁸⁴ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 14, ft. 25.

³⁸⁵ Berkouwer, *The Church*, trans. by James E. Davidson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 15, *De Kerk I*, 14-15.

³⁸⁶ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 18.

³⁸⁷ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 23, *De Kerk I*, 23.

³⁸⁸ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 26-27.

³⁸⁹ Berkouwer insists: 'Het realisme heeft meermalen het uitzicht verloren op het feit, dat er uit de aard der zaak slecht één ecclesia kan zijn en dat daarvoor het veelvoud *per definitie* wordt uitgesloten (G. C. Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 34.)'.

³⁹⁰ 'Allereerst treft men algemeen aan de gedachte...dat de verdeeldheid der kerk haar oorsprong vindt in de menselijke zonde (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 37.)'. Berkouwer also asks elsewhere, concerning the attempted rationalisation of the disunity of the Church in connection with the reality of sin: 'Is het wel mogelijk op de een of andere wijze de verscheurdheid der kerk toch nog in te bouwen, op te nemen, te verdisconteren in een bijbels genormeerd denken over de kerk, waardoor dan alles toch nog althans enigszins "begrijpelijk" wordt en tot op zekere hoogte doorzichtig? Kunnen we wellicht herademen door te denken aan "de toelating Gods" of in een

observed to retain explicability through objectivistic ecclesiological idealism or subjectivistic realism.³⁹¹ However, Berkouwer does not give credence to such views, since he takes the involvement of sin as well as the sheer newness of life in Christ through the Holy Spirit seriously.³⁹² The problem of disunity and the constant unrest concerning dividedness do not emanate from any human factors, such as humanity's natural inclination towards unity or a belief that unity will bring about more strength, which Berkouwer finds illegitimate and isolated from the revelation of God. The real reason is 'the concentrated light of divine revelation, which reveals the reality of the Church in Christ (de werkelijkheid der kerk in Christus)'.³⁹³

Here, the revealed reality of the Church "in Christ" does not connote a mere simplistic attachment or consideration of Christ in the context of articulation of the Church, thereby making enough room for theoretical speculation in the absence of the serious consideration of sin as well as the unique nature of divine truth of God that indicates the involvement of faith-response. The only possible way of speaking about sin in the midst of disunity is 'a deep confession of guilt, so deep that one might expect unimaginable things to result from it'.³⁹⁴ Explaining away this dark reality by way of ecclesiological defeatism, or endorsing the maintenance of the status quo or triumphalism by lifting the Church over the concrete reality where the impact of sin is undeniable, is not legitimate. The illumination of the eschaton in which the complete and perfect unity is expected to be accomplished and materialised is not to be metamorphosed into a form of excuse for the current dividedness, seeing that, 'in the New Testament, the eschaton never gives assurance with respect to what belongs to human guilt'.³⁹⁵ Specifically, Berkouwer acknowledges and clarifies the distinction made by the Reformation theology between the visible and invisible Church in the context of its polemic with Rome as a reminder of 'the Church's essence as the congregation of the faithful in the fellowship with Christ through the Spirit'.³⁹⁶ However, he also detects room for escape into the pitfall of eschatological perfection with the reassurance of the invisible Church, since the

dóordenken over de "feitelijkheid" der kerk verband leggen met Gods (uiteindelijke!) bedoeling, Zijn wil, gelijk soms in de dogmatiek verwezen werd naar de raadselachtige en onuitlegbare uitspraak, dat de zonde in de Raad Gods was "opgenomen", ook al trachtte men tevergeefs het bijbels apriori te handhaven, dat God niet was "causa peccati" (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 35.)? It appears here that Berkouwer puts weight on the fruitlessness in rationalistic effort in reconciling between the sin—not a concept of sin in abstraction but that committed by the Church—that, according to the *a priori* understanding, is not caused by God and the reality of disunity by pointing to the incomprehensible "Council of God" in which sin is allowed, thereby endowing a room for relief in status quo (*herademen*).

³⁹¹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 34. Berkouwer uses the expression "alle vlucht", signifying all sorts of escape or avoidance (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 34.).

³⁹² Berkouwer discusses the supra- and infralapsarianism in relation to the absolute counsel of God and the irrationality and unreasonableness (het onredelijke) of sin (Berkouwer, *De Verkiezing Gods*, 336.). He agrees with Bavinck's elaboration, which upholds the core motifs of supra- and infralapsarianism, which are to be the one absolute counsel of God and the *contra* nature instead of *praeter, voluntatem Dei* of sin (Berkouwer, *De Verkiezing Gods*, 336-337.). The concept of the "necessity" of sin is linked to the monism of supralapsarianism, which sees the singleness of the counsel of God, but cannot escape the conclusion of *praeter, voluntatem Dei* of sin at the same time (Berkouwer, *De Verkiezing Gods*, 334, 337.). Berkouwer rejects any view in any area of dogmatics that introduces sin as something necessary or self-explanatory rather than in terms of its destructiveness and unreasonableness.

³⁹³ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 32, *De Kerk I*, 34-35.

³⁹⁴ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 34, *De Kerk I*, 38.

³⁹⁵ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 35-36, *De Kerk I*, 40.

³⁹⁶ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 37, *De Kerk I*, 42. Melancthon's *Apology* is cited here for clarification of the motif in making distinction between the visible and invisible Church, which is not to fantasise about the ethereal community in platonic realm, but to give a thrust that the institutionality of the Church cannot replace the fellowship in Christ through the Holy Spirit as the Church's real essence: 'Neque vero somniamus nos Platoniam civitatem, ut quidam impie cavillantur, sed dicimus existere hanc ecclesiam, videlicet vere credentes ac iustos sparsos per totum orbem (Philip Melancthon, *Apologia Confessionis*, Art. VII-VIII, 20.)'.

invisible Church in its numbers and reality is hidden and therefore 'would be disclosed not in this world but in the future'.³⁹⁷ It means that, despite the motif of the testing of the Church and individual believers in adopting the terminological usage of the visible and invisible Church, such distinction has also been used to endow an asylum from the unrest of disunity, insofar as sin can only affect the visible Church and does not disrupt the invisible Church in view of its perfect disclosure in the eschaton. In response to this, Berkouwer presses on the point of view that, when it comes to the unity of the Church, the reasonability (de duidelijkheid) of explanation should not substitute God's intention and the reality of one Shepherd.³⁹⁸ The impossibility of disunity is substantiated by the identification of division as an unbearable evil ('een ondragelijk kwaad').³⁹⁹ Berkouwer looks into the case of 1 Corinthians in which what occurred is the disunity and division due to the slogans—mainly with attachment to specific persons—and separations, even in the realm of faith.⁴⁰⁰ The singularity and sufficiency of Christ in Paul's question "Is Christ divided?" penetrates the reality of church division in Corinth.⁴⁰¹ This Christ-centredness and the unity of faith in consideration of the unity of the Church are elaborated in Berkouwer's elucidation of Jesus' prayer in John 17. Jesus' prayer for the unity occurs to be not an isolated business, but concerns the salvation of the world, where the linkage between the two is not construed as direct, but indirect—de "omweg".⁴⁰² At this juncture, the clarification is made of the nature of the unity of the Church, which is visible in its profound togetherness and concordia.⁴⁰³ Specifically, this unity, an indissoluble unity, unveils its wonder awakened by the sent, crucified, and risen Lord who is the Head of the Church.⁴⁰⁴ It is a unity that is correlated with the purpose and direction of the Church, just as Christ demonstrated.⁴⁰⁵ This unity is to show forth Christ to the world through its deep and profound togetherness in love in Christ, who is the very source of the love, as well as the proclamation of the Word for repentance and recognition. It, at the same time, expresses the consonance and harmony of one witness, meaning the unity of faith and witness.⁴⁰⁶ That is why inquiring whether truth or unity should come first is utterly meaningless.⁴⁰⁷

At this juncture, the bond between the singleness of the witness and the unity of the Church requires further elucidation, as Berkouwer refers to it in his discussion on the spatial catholicity and apostolicity of the Church, which are interrelated to his view on unity itself. First of all, Berkouwer elucidates that 'the confession of catholicity is preceded by that of the

³⁹⁷ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 39, *De Kerk I*, 43.

³⁹⁸ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 38.

³⁹⁹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 46. Elsewhere, Berkouwer states, as concerns possible skeptical reactions that his argumentation sounds rather idealistic and unrealistic, seeing that the plurality, not unity, dominates the speeches of the churches: '...zal echter geen enkele "verklaring" de spanning mogen matigen, vooral niet, wanneer we enigszins hebben verstaan, hoezeer het "mysterium iniquitatis" het echte "mysterion" weersprekt (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 60.)'.

⁴⁰⁰ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 46. Berkouwer cites Calvin's exposition of Corinthian division with special attention to the factions according to persons and the resultant tearing apart of 'the unity of faith' (*de geloofseenheid*) (Berkouwer, *The Church*, 41, *De Kerk I*, 46.).

⁴⁰¹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 44-45.

⁴⁰² Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 51.

⁴⁰³ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 51. 'Zo wordt het doel der eenheid aangeduid en men zou haar *in haar eenheid* een brief van Christus kunnen noemen, waarvan Paulus spreekt als "kenbaar en leesbaar voor alle mensen" (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 51.)'.

⁴⁰⁴ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 52.

⁴⁰⁵ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 53.

⁴⁰⁶ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 53. Berkouwer criticises the spiritualist approach, which overlooks the human witness in his/her subjectivity as God's ordinance for salvation. He finds it as dissonant with Paul's teaching: '...de weg naar het geloof afgesloten ziet zonder de prediking, de menselijke verkondiging (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 53.)'.

⁴⁰⁷ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 56.

Holy Spirit': *credo in Spiritum Sanctam*.⁴⁰⁸ This assertion is grounded on the universality of the gospel. Boundaries and categories formulated and fixated by humans for discrimination or exclusion thereof are overcome in the Holy Spirit and in the universality of the gospel of Jesus Christ.⁴⁰⁹ However, this universal nature of catholicity does not connote syncretistic disposition that downplays 'the original meaning of (qualitative!) catholicity'. The meaning of catholicity can only be found in the gospel of Jesus Christ in its depth and width.⁴¹⁰ The essential nature of the gospel is the gospel of the cross, since the glory surfaces from the cross.⁴¹¹ This vein of explication specifies the singularity of the gospel, the gospel of the cross and resurrection, which should be taken into consideration in association with the adequate understanding of the meaning of catholicity.

For Berkouwer, it is not legitimate to state merely the continuity of the Church in an objectivistic fashion where the decisive dimension of the critical testing on the ground of the gospel loses its force and meaningfulness in the life of the Church. In his discussion on the apostolicity of the Church, especially in terms of the apostolic succession: *successio personarum* and *successio Verbi* or *doctrinae*,⁴¹² Berkouwer acknowledges Rome's emphasis on the concreteness of infallibility in *ecclesia visibilis* and engages with its notion of infallibility and, in connection, the infallibility of the pope in succession to the Apostle Peter, which is accompanied by the pneumatic ecclesiological concepts such as "*assistentia divina*" and "*vigilantia*" in harmony with "*custodia*". The visibly verifiable historical unbroken succession ('een ononderbroken opvolging'), along with the emphasis on the empowerment of the successors of Peter inspired by Matt. 16, indicates the infallibility of the Church, which connotes its irreformability and the rejection of 'the possibility of error' as well as appeals thereto.⁴¹³ Berkouwer deems simplistic the manner in which Rome has perceived and applied this passage as the guarantee for the continuity of the Church by pronouncing that Peter is the prince of the apostles ("princeps apostolorum omnium"), the head of the Church militant ("*totius Ecclesiae militantis visibile caput*"), 'the pillar of faith, and the foundation of the Catholic Church' ("*fidēique columma et Ecclesiae catholicae fundamentum*"). The promise of Christ to Peter plays a decisive role for the solidified conceptualisation of continuity, and the person of the pope in the person of Peter was then made its concrete guarantor, since Peter lives to this day and forever in the successors of his ("ad hoc usque tempus et semper in suis successoribus").⁴¹⁴ Berkouwer points at the sheer discontinuity in Matt. 16, Matt 26 and Gal. 2 instead of the claimed continuity here, pointing out that there are two layers of continuity – Peter's self-announcement as *custus* and Christ's intercession for him in the break and the discontinuity in direction to renewal and restoration.⁴¹⁵

Calvin, instead, could not accept the concept of "a nemine judicatur" because of his conviction that, only with the "captivitas voluntaria", the leading of the Holy Spirit can be experienced.⁴¹⁶ Berkouwer describes:

⁴⁰⁸ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 125, *De Kerk I*, 154. Berkouwer briefly comments on the Uppsala Assembly's theme on ecclesiology that links the Holy Spirit and the catholicity of the Church. He approves of the connection between the gift (*gave*) and the calling (*opgave*) in this report (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 154.).

⁴⁰⁹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 154-155.

⁴¹⁰ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 155-157.

⁴¹¹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 157.

⁴¹² Berkouwer *De Kerk II: Apostoliciteit en Heiligheid* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1972), 88-89.

⁴¹³ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 72-74.

⁴¹⁴ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 74. ft. 39, 40.

⁴¹⁵ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 78-80.

⁴¹⁶ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 83.

'...Calvin...points out that they [councils] have not been legitimised *a priori*, but are tested according to the rule that Christ is "in our midst" when we are gathered in His Name (*Inst.*, IV, 9, 2). Apart from this dimension, the promise degenerates into an "objective" prediction. Not in antithesis to the promise of the Spirit, but in conformity with that promise, Calvin discovers a balance on which to judge men and angels (*Inst.*, IV, 9, 9) that can test the Church in all ages. And therein, "the whole empowerment of the apostolate is implied".⁴¹⁷

Therefore, Berkouwer explains that, for Calvin, without disregarding the Petrine foundation, the way of the Holy Spirit does not guarantee as if it is a matter of givenness the continuity of the Church, but rather strongly indicates the way of testing of the obedience and faith of the Church on the basis of the gospel.⁴¹⁸ The formalised understanding of the relation between "Ursprungsphase" and "Folgezeit" is to be rejected, but the return (Rückwendung) and relatedness (betrokkenheid) to the single time of salvation stays as the point to which the Church in the "Folgezeit" is constantly directed.⁴¹⁹ Berkouwer renders the correlative understanding that directly brings together the twofoldness of the Church and the Holy Spirit, as suggested by Irenaeus of Lyons, where the Church's historical succession does not stand in isolation, but comes under the testing of the Word and the Spirit for its obedience and faith. Irenaeus' words come forth: "*Ubi enim ecclesia, ibi est Spiritus Dei et ubi Spiritus Dei, illic ecclesia et omnis gratia*".⁴²⁰ Here, Berkouwer does not provide Irenaeus' ecclesiology in detail, but chooses to focus on the formulation of "ubi-ibi", since he believes that it shows the correlative way of approaching the meaning of the apostolic succession.⁴²¹ The phrase that Berkouwer uses for this apostolicity in succession, 'de apostolische bepaaldheid der kerk', seems to have profound meaning, because the apostolic peculiarity here signifies both the historical and Spiritual reality of the Church as the *custodia*.⁴²²

Now then, the singleness of the gospel in connection with Church unity raises a question regarding the catholicity and apostolicity of the confession of faith. First, Berkouwer, in light of the temporal catholic continuity of the Church, draws attention to two possible dangers exposed by the biblical teaching of the unchangeability of the gospel, namely 'the danger of a plus' and 'the danger of a minus'. The former indicates the accruelement by humans, particularly by way of traditionalism, which piles weights 'on new eras, thus throwing a stumbling block along the ways of the gospel', whereas the latter designates the reductionistic attempt which

⁴¹⁷ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 270, *De Kerk II*, 82-83.

⁴¹⁸ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 82-84.

⁴¹⁹ In this relation, Berkouwer speaks about the contextualisation of the office and service in accordance with the variation of situations over against the rigid systematisation that would be deemed due to be applied once for all (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 87-88.). Thus, Berkouwer seems sceptical about the model-based thinking, which suggests the sense of universal continuity. At the same time, it is duly noticeable that he underscores the normative past in the context of discussing contextualisation by using the term the standardization (de normering) that should dominate the Church structure (de structuur der kerk) in all of its forms (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 88.). He quotes H. N. Ridderbos who also rejects arbitrariness in such contextualised variations: 'De situationele variatie rechtvaardigt uit de aard der zaak geen willekeur, nu juist het concentratie-punt in alle variatie op evidente wijze bepaald is door het uitzicht op de regering der kerk door het Woord en de Geest (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 88, ft. 123.)'.

⁴²⁰ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 90.

⁴²¹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 90-91. Berkouwer interprets the Irenaeus phrase correlatively in contrast to objectivistic mechanical exegesis in favour of the automatic authorisation of the Church office. Berkouwer comments against such an interpretation that emphasises one-sidedly the direction from the Church to the Holy Spirit: 'Maar Irenaeus kan ook zeggen: ubi Spiritus, ibi ecclesia en zo wordt alle automatisme en alle vanzelfsprekendheid gebannen in een waarschuwing, dat men over de relatie tussen de kerk en de Heilige Geest alleen kan spreken in de sfeer van geloof en verantwoordelijkheid en die relatie niet kan objectiveren in een buiten dat geloof en deze verantwoordelijkheid omgaande stand van zaken (Berkouwer, *Vatikaans Concilie*, 207.)'.

⁴²² Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 91.

then compromises 'the unchangeability of the gospel'.⁴²³ Berkouwer argues sternly against an attempt in dogmatics to perpetuate a particular set of propositional truths as if the unchangeability of the gospel proclamation is to be equalled to the propositions and truths discovered and preserved without modification in the field of natural sciences.⁴²⁴ It is because, by bestowing a set of dogmas with the nature of infallibility alongside the claim of 'the leading of the Holy Spirit', the petrification of unchangeability takes place and the unfruitfulness turns out to be the result.⁴²⁵ The fear of possible adaptation loses sight of the calling of the Church to reach out to the world with 'countless encounters and confrontations' in her place in the midst of the world.⁴²⁶ This type of isolationism fails to let the Church 'reflect on her own identity, on her ways in Christ (1 Cor. 4:17), and on the central meaning and implications of the message of salvation', and it might well tend to head to the way of obsession in certain elements of tradition which are not really correlated to the gospel of salvation.⁴²⁷ The unchangeability can only be detected on the way of the life of the Church in faith-response to God and living out the gospel of salvation. Petrification—due to the fear—as well as reductionism cannot stand up to the calling the Church receives from God in the unchangeable gospel. It is for this reason that the manifestation of the saving power of God in the gospel of Jesus Christ through the faith-response and obedience of the Church in the concrete salvation-history is the only *locus* in which the true sense of continuity in unchangeability is to be observed.

Through the lens of apostolicity, the question of the rightness and relevance of confessions is brought onto the table. Berkouwer observes that, in the New Testament, the deep personal and spiritual nature of the confession of the Church and its sheer seriousness are evinced by the contradiction between the confession and renouncement of the Lord, which discloses the witnessing character of the Christian faith: *homologia*.⁴²⁸ *Homologia* is not in itself the truth, but the focused truth (*gerichte waarheid*), involving the confessing person—the faith with the heart. Also, it has a public face, as 1 Tim. 6:12 clearly indicates, since it takes place in the presence of people.⁴²⁹ In other words, the confession of the Church is—from the stage of origin—the confession of faith, which has both public and personal involvement, and the centre of the confession is the Lord Jesus Christ.⁴³⁰ The centrality of Christ, against the background of the debates on the differences in confessions and that of the confession of the Church in *status confessionis* in the new context, does not give up on the unmistakable scope of the confession in the New Testament,⁴³¹ which is, for Paul, the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ.⁴³²

⁴²³ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 193, *De Kerk I*, 239-240.

⁴²⁴ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 190, *De Kerk I*, 235-236.

⁴²⁵ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 190, *De Kerk I*, 236.

⁴²⁶ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 191, *De Kerk I*, 236.

⁴²⁷ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 192, *De Kerk I*, 238-239.

⁴²⁸ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 93.

⁴²⁹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 93-94.

⁴³⁰ According to Berkouwer, Bavinck's view is that the faith is not the sum of articles for salvation ("een optelsom van artikelen, wier kennis en toestemming ter zaligheid nodig was"), but the decisive directedness in faith and confession on the message of salvation ('een beslissende gerichtheid in geloven en belijden op de boodschap des heils' (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 99.)). The relatedness to Christ and the believing trust in Him receive the place of concentration (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 99.). It seems that Berkouwer approves of Bavinck's correlative view on the centre of Christian faith, because of its resonance with the New Testament portrayal.

⁴³¹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 94-95.

⁴³² Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 100-101. A particular transition happened in regards to the perception of differences of confessions, which, in the past, used to deploy quite strong languages such as condemnation (*damnatus*), rejection of error (*relectio errorum*) or *anathema*. What took place is the substantial attenuation of such intensity, and, instead, the term such as "pluriformity" has been employed for designating the differences of the churches.

Confessions retain the time-boundness (de tijdgebondenheid) in terms of the particularity and limitedness of human expression along with the specific set of contextual factors, including philosophical presuppositions, languages, the scope of concerns, and so forth.⁴³³ Any human formulation of the confessions, for Berkouwer, cannot be regarded absolute and considered above the influence of times and contexts, but is to be deemed in terms of its inadequacy and limitedness.⁴³⁴ For instance, the concentration that concerned Luther, namely the justification by faith, had a weighty tone and was the determining factor for the Church: "*articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae*".⁴³⁵ The *positivum* of the salvation of God is divulged through the concentration against the background of the polemical context Luther was faced with. This concentration, owing to its confined horizon with the specific issue it copes with, could be regarded too narrow and irrelevant to the contemporary concrete challenges and questions, because of its non-inclusion of the outlook and real attentiveness to the outside world, let alone the narrowed concern of *pro me* within the justification question.⁴³⁶ Nevertheless, in the midst of this inquiry, Berkouwer warns of losing sight of the centre or the scope of the faith of the Church, which can only determine the genuineness of concentrations.⁴³⁷

In the same vein of the continuity of *status confessionis*, Berkouwer seems to view the Church's responsiveness and confession to new circumstances as following its apostolic calling.⁴³⁸ Making the Church's confession as something esoteric does not live up to its calling for rightness and relevance.⁴³⁹ The fear of the possibility of destructive deformation (destructieve *omvorming*) of dogmas cannot be a sufficient excuse for the negligence of further interpretation of the dogmas of the Church.⁴⁴⁰ The concreteness of the confession of faith in Berkouwer's understanding is clear, and it resonates with the idea that the Word of God is the lamp and light to the concrete path, not merely a general category.⁴⁴¹ Also, in *status confessionis*, the analysis of the context the confession is aimed at is a crucial part of the process, and Berkouwer comments that a charismatic and intuitive insight is involved, which then receives, for its validity, the approval from the whole Church.⁴⁴² It occurs to be quite transparent that the emphasis surrounding the entire discussion on *status confessionis* is on the correlation between revelation and faith and its implementation of propagating confessions in the faced context, since, without the objectivity of revelation, the continuity of

Berkouwer enquires if it might entail the devaluation of the New Testament confession (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 94-95.). Also, when Berkouwer speaks about *status confessionis*, the Holy Spirit is attached to it all the time, seemingly because of the underlining understanding of the relationship between the Word and the Spirit, as the Spirit testifies to the truth, and the core of the truth here is the Lordship and Messiahship of Jesus Christ (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 94-95.). To put it in another way, for Berkouwer, being pneumatological does not mean relativisation of the confession, but rather the transparent christocentricity. The christocentricity of the confession refuses the levelling of differences of confessions as if all of them have the same significance (96. See also, G. C. Berkouwer, *Verontrusting en Verantwoordelijkheid* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1969), 17-18.).

⁴³³ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 106.

⁴³⁴ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 106-107.

⁴³⁵ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 102. Berkouwer cites the famous dictum of Luther's on the justification by the faith: "Von diesem Artikel kann man nicht weichen oder nachgeben, es falle Himmel und Erde oder was nicht bleiben will"..."auf diesem Artikel stehet alles was wir gegen den Pabst, Teufel und Welt lehren und leben" (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 102.).

⁴³⁶ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 103.

⁴³⁷ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 287, *De Kerk II*, 103.

⁴³⁸ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 117, 120-121.

⁴³⁹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 120.

⁴⁴⁰ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 108-109, 111.

⁴⁴¹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 118.

⁴⁴² Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 118

confessions will be lost, and, without the involvement of faith, the Church's calling for apostolicity cannot be met with the faithful response and obedience by the Church.⁴⁴³

What Berkouwer rebuts is an objectivistic affirmation of the unity of the Church as if it can be explicated in terms of givenness and guarantee. The motif of the testing of the gospel does not give in to the self-content ecclesiological conviction of unity or to any rash conclusion of the accomplished unity without serious regard to the meaningfulness of the confession of *credo ecclesiam*. The singleness of the gospel, so long as it is perceived in association with the unity of the Church, requires a multi-dimensional treatment. Berkouwer's "centre" question and the personal and witnessing nature of confession in the New Testament function as the groundwork for *status confessionis*, which enquires the rightness and relevance of confession in a given context. The testing of the gospel denounces any simplistic relativism of the acceptance of plural confessions, let alone indifferent ecclesiological irenism. It also vetoes any traditionalistic confessionalism that basically lifts a certain form of confession from the concrete ground of the life of the Church and absolutises it for all places and all times. The bond between the single witness and the unity of the Church seems to lead to the heart of confessions, the clear visibility of the one Lord.

Together with the aforementioned standpoints, it seems that Berkouwer comprehends fellowship (*gemeenschap*) to be the essential nature of unity by its depth of meaning and inclusion of the correlative reality of unity. The understanding of this fellowship pertains to the sheer uniqueness in its relatedness to Christ, as the much-discussed term "the body of Christ" communicates.⁴⁴⁴ In the adequate understanding of the body of Christ, there is no room for individualism even as the individuality is never ignored in the dynamic of the act of God in salvation and reconciliation, all of which puts an end to individualistic fragmentation.⁴⁴⁵ It also excludes any ecclesiological pluralism where the fact that the only locus of remark on plurality in the Scripture is the warning of false christs is overlooked,⁴⁴⁶ or simplistic identification of the Church with Christ where the reality of sharp calling and admonition of God is obscured.⁴⁴⁷ The union with Christ—"Unio cum Christo"—which

⁴⁴³ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 121. Berkouwer's citation of Luther in relation is remarkable: "Wo der Glaube ist, kann es sich nicht halten, es beweiset sich, bricht heraus und bekennet und lehret solch Evangelium vor den Leuten und wagt sein Leben daran" (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 120.). This quote shows clearly how Berkouwer understands the nature of Christian faith.

⁴⁴⁴ Berkouwer expresses his view that the body of Christ, citing Ridderbos, suggests a more definite Christological nature to the notion of the people of God (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 96.).

⁴⁴⁵ 'De roep tot eenheid en gemeenschap heeft een diepe achtergrond in Gods reddend en verzoenend handelen, waarin de enkeling niet verdwijnt achter de vage contouren van een "totaliteit", maar wel uit zijn verenkeling en vereenzaming wordt bevrijd om een plaats te krijgen in deze nieuwe gemeenschap...waarop de enkeling in een mensenlijke gemeenschap een plaats ontvangt en alle individualisme zijn einde tegemoet gaat (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 94-95.).' Berkouwer even calls the Pauline description of the body of Christ in 1 Corinthians as anti-individualistic: 'Men zou kunnen zeggen, dat Paulus' denken over de kerk sterk anti-individualistisch van aard is. De gemeente bestaat niet uit van elkaar onafhankelijke "monaden", ieder met een eigen venster, maar ze vormt een gemeenschap, waarin alle isolering doorbroken is en vervangen wordt door de "sympathie": als één lid lijdt, lijden alle leden en als één lid eer ontvangt, delen alle leden in de vreugde (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 98.).'

⁴⁴⁶ Berkouwer refers to Matthew 24:24 (Ψευδόχριστοι) (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 94.).

⁴⁴⁷ It is attended to that the mystical union with Christ does not signify a kind of mingling into 'a physical person (*één fysiek persoon*)', as testified to in the encyclical "Mystici Corporis Christi" in 1943, but expresses a unique union in which the distinction between the Church and Christ is made as well as the reality of sheer union in fellowship, expressed by Paul as "being in Christ" or "Christ living in us", is acknowledged (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 104-106.). Subsequently, Berkouwer puts forward the biblical examples from Colossians and Ephesians that specify the clear distinction in the very reality of union in relationship between Christ and the Church within which His headship and the Church's subjection to Him as His body are manifested (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 106.). Berkouwer further argues: 'Er is nl. geen sprake van een theoretisch "schouwen" in een benadering, die het "zijn" op zichzelf op het oog heeft, een geïsoleerd "wezen" der kerk als "mystieke" realiteit, maar van een indringend en onlosmakelijk verband met het concrete leven der kerk op aarde, gericht op een uieke "representatie" van het heilswerk van Christus en van Zijn volheid (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 107.).' The concreteness of the Church in

coincides with the body of Christ in fellowship suggests the unacceptability, because of the Church's relatedness (*verbondenheid*) to Christ, of mere speculative or theoretical disputation while firmly rooted in either objectivistic ontological stance with emphasis on the verticality of fellowship in view of the first commandments or the perspective in line with the horizontal commandments of God with a selective use of the Scripture.⁴⁴⁸ This union in fellowship signifies the sheer newness and 'the radical transition' ('*de radicale overgang*') realised in Christ through the Holy Spirit and manifested in the 'fellowship in unity and concord, in knowledge, faith, and love' accompanied by the common faith (*gemeenschappelijk* geloof) and common salvation (*gemeenschappelijk* heil) testified to by the Church.⁴⁴⁹ This radical newness is both a gift and a calling. The body of Christ, according to Berkouwer, is 'the proclamation of great disquiet in and for the Church', together with the admonition for 'the same mind', 'the same love', being 'in full accord and of one mind', having 'a "mind" that can be compared to Christ's', being directed 'to another', having 'humility against the background of Christ's emptying and humbling Himself'.⁴⁵⁰

For Berkouwer, "pluriformity" is of significance. He indicates that a genuine kind of pluriformity can only exist in the fellowship in Christ.⁴⁵¹ He certainly does not pit himself against pluriformity *per se*, but critiques the self-explanatory theorisation of pluriformity, highlighting 'the division of the Church in the light of riches and variation' whereas 'the outlook on the one flock and the one Shepherd is obscured'.⁴⁵² Pluriformity itself is not to be denied, as exemplified in 1 Corinthians 12 where diversity, differences, and variation in terms of calling and gifts do not instigate discords but serves fellowship, as 'all variation is related to the same Lord' and 'serviceable for the common calling'.⁴⁵³ The problem arises only when 'the mixing of creaturely pluriformity and the division of the Church' takes place, whereby disunity turns into a thing of necessity or even virtue.⁴⁵⁴ In other words, the real issue has to do with the reality of disunity, which 'stands under God's criticism', as it 'obscures God's manifold wisdom and varied grace'.⁴⁵⁵

With regards to the subject of *vestigia ecclesiae*, in all its complexity, Berkouwer suggests that it does not legitimise a shallow solution in virtue of its complex two-sidedness, namely recognition and critical note. He points at the judgment and profession of "*vestigia*" in the Reformation context, as clearly shown in Calvin's recognition of "*vestigia*" in the Roman Catholic Church that expresses sheer critical notes.⁴⁵⁶ Seeing that Calvin employed strong

reality is a consistently highlighted theme in Berkouwer's ecclesiology, and he acknowledges such an attempt in the aforementioned encyclical "Mystici Corporis Christi" (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 105.).

⁴⁴⁸ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 108-109.

⁴⁴⁹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 109. Here, "*gemeenschappelijk*" which is attached to the faith and salvation of the Church in Berkouwer seems to have much deeper meaning than "commonality", so long as his coherent explication on the fellowship (*gemeenschap*) in its nature and depth of uniqueness is taken seriously. It refers to the sheer closeness (*nabijheid*) of Christ in the Church's relatedness to Him as the Lord and the Head and, at the same time, the mystery of union. Berkouwer's biblical quotation of Titus 1:4 and Jude 3 entails the commonness (κατά κοινὴν πίστιν and περί της κοινῆς ἡμῶν σωτηρίας) (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 109.).

⁴⁵⁰ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 91, *De Kerk I*, 110.

⁴⁵¹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 92-93.

⁴⁵² Berkouwer, *The Church*, 70, *De Kerk I*, 86.

⁴⁵³ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 52, *De Kerk I*, 63. The revelation of God also entails pluriformity and variation, as observed in the multiplicity of forefathers, according to the Book of Hebrews 1, as well as 'the "plurality" of the gospels, which, although they are so varied, are still related in their diversity to the one message of salvation (Berkouwer, *The Church*, 53, *De Kerk I*, 63.)'.

⁴⁵⁴ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 53, *De Kerk I*, 63-64.

⁴⁵⁵ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 54, *De Kerk I*, 64. Eduardo Echeverria, *Berkouwer and Catholicism*, 41-42.

⁴⁵⁶ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 78-80. Berkouwer also notes that Calvin's critical judgment of Rome is still influential in the ecclesiological thinking of his time (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 80.).

expressions, e.g. "the ruin" (de ruïne) and "almost dead" (bijna gedood),⁴⁵⁷ to depict the spiritual condition of the Roman Catholic Church in the context of suggesting "*vestigia*" in this church, this terminology was clearly not deployed against the background of an ecumenical concession in a friendly environment.⁴⁵⁸ What should be emphasised here in association with *vestigia* is—contrary to the self-content idea of pluriformity—the preservation and the faithfulness of God' ('de bewaring en de trouw Gods').⁴⁵⁹ The underlining thrust in Calvin's polemic with Rome is the true mark (kenmerk) of the Church, which is 'listening to the voice of the Shepherd' ('Het luisteren naar de stem van de Herder') or the reality that the Word of God is heard.⁴⁶⁰ Keeping that in mind, Berkouwer also points out that it should be remembered that a judgment on "*vestigia*" is a contextualised matter in a specific time ('in een bepaalde tijd'),⁴⁶¹ and cannot be declared on a certain church as if it is perennially accurate or complete.⁴⁶² His attention, therefore, is firmly set on the present, not the past, in the dynamics of testing of "*vestigia*" in oneself and others, responding to the calling of the Church to be truthful to the Lord in word and deed.⁴⁶³

Last but not least, the newness of fellowship is not an excuse for the tempering of the impatience due to the provisionality of the Church in her imperfection and flaws within the hostile surroundings in the modern era.⁴⁶⁴ The hostility of surroundings along with all kinds of resistances and critiques cannot lead to the abandonment of the genuine confession of "*credo ecclesiam*" together with the richness and mystery of the Church.⁴⁶⁵ It does not denote ecclesiological triumphalism, so long as the recognition of 'the mystery of guilt (het raadsel van de schuld)', 'division' (breuk en verdeeldheid)', 'alienation' (vervreemding en verwijdering)', and 'isolation and unfruitfulness (vereenzaming en onvruchtbaarheid)' is fully grasped.⁴⁶⁶ In rejection of a triumphalist and defeatist ecclesiology, what appeals to Berkouwer the most is the holy impatience for unity in the dynamic of gift and calling.⁴⁶⁷ The fellowship in unity is not intended to be compromised in virtue of provisionality or to justify the resting within the shell of objectivistic ecclesiological triumphalism, but it regains its vitality and meaningfulness precisely within the dynamic of the holy impatience in her "divine-human" reality.⁴⁶⁸ The newness and uniqueness of indicatives originated by and belonging to Christ, as seen in the various expressions regarding the Church's relatedness to

⁴⁵⁷ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 79. Further descriptions are 'Christus is in haar halfverborgen, het evangelie verduisterd, de vroomheid verdreven en de dienst van God bijna vernietigd (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 79.)'.

⁴⁵⁸ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 79-81.

⁴⁵⁹ De *vestigia* staan niet naast de ruïne, maar hebben er op betrekking en dan is er maar niet sprake van de erkenning van individueel geloof onder "de pausgezinden", maar van bezinning over de kerk vanuit de bewaring en de trouw Gods (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 80.). Berkouwer understands that the preservation and faithfulness of God is the very foundation for the existence of *vestigia ecclesiae* (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 81.).

⁴⁶⁰ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 82.

⁴⁶¹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 84.

⁴⁶² Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 81. 'Het spreekt vanzelf, dat er bij de *vestigia ecclesiae* en de daarin besloten relatieve erkenning nimmer sprake kan zijn van een statisch onveranderlijk oordeel over andere kerken. In de geschiedenis der kerk is *nooit* sprake van stilstand, maar van een dynamisch proces in malam òf in bonam partem, van groei in de een of andere richting van voortgaande vervreemding en deformatie òf van reformatie tot de ware dienst van God. Het oordeel over de "*vestigia*" is met deze dynamiek der geschiedenis ten nauwste verbonden (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 81.)'.

⁴⁶³ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 86-87.

⁴⁶⁴ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 121.

⁴⁶⁵ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 121.

⁴⁶⁶ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 121.

⁴⁶⁷ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 123

⁴⁶⁸ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 102, *De Kerk I*, 124.

Christ, such as Romans 8 in the midst of her struggles, correlates with the newness and uniqueness of imperatives in view of the holy impatience.⁴⁶⁹ In other words, 'relating the *credere ecclesiam* to Christ' signifies the sheer weight of the Church's calling and responsibility for unity.⁴⁷⁰

3.2.2.2. Holiness of the Church

From the beginning, Berkouwer makes it clear that holiness must be understood and examined in terms of concreteness and visibility instead of an objectivistic, abstracted notion of its meaningfulness.⁴⁷¹ The distinctiveness of holiness is that, whereas other attributes, such as catholicity and apostolicity, would not invoke a particular *Vorverständnis*, it summons 'all sorts of associations for practically everyone', commonly linked to cleanness, purity, or the state of perfection freed from corruption, evil or contamination.⁴⁷² The intended signification of holiness employed by the Church resonates with this *Vorverständnis*, since 'holiness is usually thought of as perfection and cleanness, the radiation of a deep, striking purity; and the Church has always spoken about holiness in such a way that, in any case, has something to do with that'. Holiness, says Berkouwer, imports the sense of visibility and concreteness, which becomes perceivable and recognisable 'as a light that shines in the darkness'.⁴⁷³ The very character of the visibility of holiness pits itself against any attempt to shelving it into one of the events in the future, but rather emphasises the real urgency of the question regarding 'the meaning of the *credo*'.⁴⁷⁴

Berkouwer draws in the New Testament in order to elucidate the biblical correlative image of holiness in its objective reality, since, according to 1 Peter, 'holiness is in the context of election, calling, and mercy (2:10)', as well as in its subjective dimension where the visibility of the Church cannot be separated from her holiness. Holiness is closely associated with the newness of life in Christ. Berkouwer states:

'In the New Testament...holiness is not in the least a faraway, abstract thing, but a reality that is inseparably connected to what has happened in a radical transition from the former manner of life to a new life (Eph. 4:22), in being set free from the law of sin and death (Rom: 8:2), and even in passing from death to life (1 John 3:14). The Church is called holy in these radical connections, in this rupture that arose through the call out of darkness into marvellous light (1 Pet. 2:9)'.⁴⁷⁵

In this connection, Berkouwer points out that the ancient rigorous sectarian heretics—such as Novatians or Donatists—referred to the identifications of the Church portrayed in the New Testament in the context of their striving for materialising the holy Church by any means.⁴⁷⁶ The Church did not handle easily this critique backed by the New Testament data, and falls in the dilemma between the confession and empirical reality, which then has prompted the Church towards reconciling these two, but ending up putting weight on the objectivity and givenness of holiness, while facing criticisms for not taking the *credo* seriously and making

⁴⁶⁹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 122.

⁴⁷⁰ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 102, *De Kerk I*, 124

⁴⁷¹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 133.

⁴⁷² Berkouwer, *The Church*, 313, *De Kerk II*, 131.

⁴⁷³ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 314, *De Kerk II*, 132.

⁴⁷⁴ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 315, *De Kerk II*, 133. Berkouwer pays attention to the concreteness of holiness experienced in the midst of life by every believer since the Reformation, citing Holle's comment in regard to Luther: "'die Heiligen vom Himmel auf die Erde hernieder gebracht hat'" (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 133.).

⁴⁷⁵ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 316, *De Kerk II*, 135.

⁴⁷⁶ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 134-135.

compromise for unholiness and evil through toleration.⁴⁷⁷ Nonetheless, for Berkouwer, 'the distinction between objective and subjective holiness can never disclose the meaning of the *credo*, at least not if one still wants to admit some connection between the *credo* and the message of the New Testament about the Church's holiness'.⁴⁷⁸ It means, in other words, that the New Testament does not explain holiness aside from the concreteness of holiness in the dynamic relationship between God and His people manifested in their conduct and directed to His service.⁴⁷⁹ The underscoring of the concreteness of holiness in the life of the Church does not implicate a denial of the understanding of holiness, but rather expresses the meaning of separation/separateness (*afzondering*) of the Church in its pursuit (*jagen*) to be holy, over against the objectivistic or even cultic viewpoint on the Church's holiness by which the concrete obedience and submission to the Word of God is avoided.⁴⁸⁰ In other words, 'this concreteness of the new life, which is called on the basis of the promise to make holiness perfect in opposition to all pollution (II Cor. 7:1), perhaps comes to the fore most pointedly in reference to the possibility of a striking holiness that can be seen in concrete deeds'.⁴⁸¹ Ultimately, the goal of this visibility is the glorification of God ('de verheerlijking Gods') as the light of God is recognised, shining forth in the midst of darkness.⁴⁸²

In the same vein with the newness of life of the Church in Christ and through the Holy Spirit, Berkouwer asks a question concerning the repetitive emergence of dialectical accounts of the holiness of the Church oscillating between its ideal and empirical reality. He maintains that the answer lies in the manifestation of the *fascinerende* in the New Testament together with which the Church is spoken of, and this *fascinans* shows forth something real in Christ. This reasoning derives from the observation that the very reason for being able to confess "*credo sanctam ecclesiam*", despite the aforementioned tension, is the *credo*'s indubitable association with the New Testament portrayal of the Church in its relationship with the Trinity, as expressed in the phrases such as 'the holy people, the temple of the Spirit, the bride, the body of Christ'.⁴⁸³ It tells a unique sort of *fascinans*, not that of self-exaltation, pretentiousness, entirely eschatological explanation along with the appearance of Christ, or even privatising of its discourse due to the realisation of the contradiction between the empirical Church and its *fascinans*.⁴⁸⁴ Berkouwer explains:

'...there is a different *fascinans*, which rests in the acceptance of the gift, the nearness of the Lord, in humility, in nostalgia, and in striving for the sanctification that is seen and experienced by others...There can only be a *fascinans* that makes the Church transparent in the outlook on what her reality in this world in Christ signifies...this *fascinans* can only be a reality in all the connections in which it appears in the New Testament...the connections of deep humility, of an understanding of indicative and imperative, of the confession of guilt and nostalgia, and of the blessing on concrete, everyday life by the power of the Spirit. In the

⁴⁷⁷ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 316-317, *De Kerk II*, 136.

⁴⁷⁸ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 317, *De Kerk II*, 136.

⁴⁷⁹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 137-139. It is evident that Berkouwer processes here the biblical revelation on holiness in the New Testament in terms of its continuity with the Old Testament, employing the quotations in the New Testament from the Old Testament, e.g. 1 Pet. 1:16 from Lev. 11:44; 19:2; 20:7 (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 138.). He attends to the continuity between the two Testaments where the same core of the meaning of holiness is disclosed. Holiness in the Scripture pits itself against a moralistic endeavour by distinguishing itself as something essentially relational to God Himself, but, at the same time, it does also against any objectivistic conclusions out of this relationality, which heads to the isolation of holiness in itself (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 137.).

⁴⁸⁰ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 140-141.

⁴⁸¹ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 322, *De Kerk II*, 141.

⁴⁸² Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 141.

⁴⁸³ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 325, *De Kerk II*, 145.

⁴⁸⁴ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 146-147.

New Testament, the life of sanctification is brought into connection not only with eschatological salvation—the vision of God (*visio Dei*)—but also with the light that radiates in this world and causes the darkness to pass away'.⁴⁸⁵

This line of reasoning coincides with Berkouwer's foundational emphasis on the newness of life of the Church on earth in Christ through the Holy Spirit, which makes it impossible to justify the status quo in a self-explanatory theory, which is without the separateness (*afzondering*) from the world in company with the manifestation of holiness which pertains to *Vorverständnis* in terms of meaning and implications. *Fascinans* rests in the dynamics of faith-response to the newness of indicatives and imperatives against the background of the eschatological vision, which, instead of being set in essential contradistinction with the present life of the Church, results in the fruits of repentance and the Holy Spirit. What is suggested here is the erroneous duality out of the reality of holiness in unity, segregating the forensic objectivity of holiness and the concreteness of subjectivity of striving, since it loses sight of the outlook on the concrete reality of fruits of holiness.⁴⁸⁶

Also, this stance on *fascinans* prohibits either objectivistic traditionalism which shrinks back to the old and trusted or subjectivistic approach in favour of transformation that forgets or neglects the truth of the gospel. The gospel reviews both the old and new with clarity and barricades the passage towards polarisation due to the tension of emphases put on one or the other.⁴⁸⁷ The isolated approach based on the old or the new apart from the involvement of the radicality of the gospel of salvation is bound to fail as lacking the genuine power, freedom, and perspective in newness or as not being able to be identified as the Christian witness grounded on the one gospel of Jesus Christ.⁴⁸⁸ Berkouwer seems to see both as caricatures of *fascinans*, which are numerous (*talloos*) and in correlation to fake glory ('*de valse roem*').⁴⁸⁹

The tension in *credo sanctam ecclesiam* owing to the contradiction between the ideal/professed and empirical reality of the Church has a direct association with the problem of sin in the life of the Church, which Berkouwer takes seriously. Berkouwer's concern lies in

⁴⁸⁵ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 328, *De Kerk II*, 148. The meaning of *Visio Dei* here can be found in his explanation of the term in his eschatology. *Visio Dei* as an eschatological terminology signifies the revealed vision of God as expressed in 1 John 3:2 by *sicuti est*—seeing God 'as He is' (G. C. Berkouwer, *De Wederkomst van Christus II* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1963), 175.). This *Visio* is connected to the current life in faith, since the *Visio* can only be anticipated by faith in the promise of God (Berkouwer, *De Wederkomst van Christus II*, 166-167.), whose path is not of the same nature with the path of sight, as the essential character of faith is expressed in Heb. 11 - faith as *ἐλεγχος* and *ὑπόστασις* of things invisible and hoped for (Berkouwer, *De Wederkomst van Christus II*, 164.). This *Visio* is deeply related to the sanctification, since faith primarily has to do with the heart, which could be pure (*zuiver*) or bad (*slecht*) according to Matt. 6:22-23 (Berkouwer, *De Wederkomst van Christus II*, 162.). This relation clarifies the correlation between *Visio Dei* and the purity of heart in continuity between the current seeing and the eschatological *Visio Dei* (Berkouwer, *De Wederkomst van Christus II*, 183.). *Visio Dei* in the Scripture has fundamental relatedness to the Lamb of God and God's salvation of His people in which the whole creation is included. It is as he says: '...blijkt duidelijk, dat het in het bijbelse spreken over God niet gaat om een verwijzing naar een abstracte, metafysische "eigenschap" Gods, die ons zou worden aangewezen, los van elke relatie tot de mens en los van de modus van zijn openbaring (Berkouwer, *De Wederkomst van Christus II*, 160, 186.)'. Due to the relatedness of *Visio Dei*, it is correlated with the purity of heart and holiness, which is emanated from the gospel of salvation (Berkouwer, *De Wederkomst van Christus II*, 190-191.). Thus, it strongly points towards the life of discipleship, 'the lived reality of faith', 'the way of sanctification' since "Everyone who thus hopes in Him purifies himself as He is pure (1 John 3:3) [ESV]". Hence, Berkouwer says 'our understanding and realising the blessed, blessing vision of God depends ultimately on this trilogy of purity, sanctification, and service' (G. C. Berkouwer, *The Return of Christ*, trans. by James C. van Oosterom (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 386, *De Wederkomst van Christus II*, 386, 191-192.).

⁴⁸⁶ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 139.

⁴⁸⁷ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 149-150. On polarisation, Berkouwer says: 'Allerlei polarisaties kunnen samenhangen met karakterologische en personalistische componenten, zowel naar de zijde van het oude - voorkeur voor elke status quo vanuit de hardnekkige virulentie van het bekende en gewende...als naar die van het nieuwe (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 150. Ft. 119.)'.

⁴⁸⁸ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 150-152.

⁴⁸⁹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 153.

the life of the Church in conjunction with *credo*, the conundrum of the imperfection of the Church—the mystery of sin ('het "mysterium iniquitatis"').⁴⁹⁰ Berkouwer observes that, even in the New Testament, the imperfection of the Church due to the sinning of individuals or even as a community seems to designate the undeniable reality of provisionality of "not yet", which discloses the 'almost inescapable structure of the life of the believers/saints' ('welhaast onvermijdelijke "structuur" van het leven der "heiligen"').⁴⁹¹ Confessions such as Heidelberg Catechism Q. 115, Belgic Confession Art. 24 and Augsburg Confession Art. 12, echo this voice, even though the motive is not to formulate the concept of the impenetrable power of sin with the term *reliquiae peccati*. The coexistence of sin and holiness cannot be rejected even in the calling for the Church to repel sins and any toleration of them.⁴⁹² Simultaneously, the coexistence of holiness and sin does not vindicate the Church's escape to the *eschaton* in which the unblemished purity and holiness can be boldly spoken of, since the biblical revelation of the New Testament determines the locus of the holiness and purity of the Church to be "on earth" 'in hac vita'.⁴⁹³ The evident involvement of the Church in this life in its eschatological directedness by the *credo ecclesiam* makes this point quite clear.⁴⁹⁴

The concrete outlook on *credo ecclesiam sanctam* is intertwined with the question of the temporal catholicity in the sense of continuity. When it comes to the temporal catholicity of the Church, Berkouwer rejects the objectivistic abstraction, which might likely be grounded on a trivial claim, as in the case of Jews' claim on their connection to Abraham. Such conception misses out the depth of the continuity ('de diepte van de continuïteit').⁴⁹⁵ The

⁴⁹⁰ What Berkouwer means by *mysterium iniquitatis* is not a mere inexplicability or unfathomableness just as the general connotation that the term "mystery" is associated with, but this peculiar *mysterium* denotes something else: the senselessness and motivelessness of sin. Its real nature of this enigma in its senselessness, meaninglessness and motivelessness can only be shown through the confession of guilt, understood in the reality of the goodness (goedheid) and magnificence (heerlijkheid) of God, and recognised and confessed in the community of believers where any attempt to clarification of the mystery of sin is rejected and only the confession, for its utter senselessness, remains through the lens of the fellowship of love (to God and neighbours) (G. C. Berkouwer, *De Zonde I: Oorsprong en Kennis der Zonde* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1958), 124-126, 131-132, 136-137.). Berkouwer conceives that the causality-based explanations of the mystery of sin have directed to the result where one's own guilt is explained and clarified with reference to the guilt of someone else ('de schuld van de ander') (Berkouwer, *De Zonde I*, 137-138). The original sin (erfzonde) and *mysterium iniquitatis*, due to the senselessness and meaninglessness of sin, cannot be clarified and explained in terms of motif, causality and reasonability. Berkouwer says: 'Het raadsel der zonde hangt samen met het *wezen* der zonde, met het antinormatieve (de wetteloosheid) en daardoor met het *zinloze* der zonde. Juist waar alle ontraadseling de ontdekking van een "zin" impliceert, is de ontraadseling van het kwaad der zonde niet mogelijk, omdat elke zingeving of zinduiding van het zinloze onmogelijk is. Daardoor verliest de zonde niet haar macht en invloed op de werkelijkheid en wordt ze nog minder iets irreëls of onwaarschijnlijks, maar ze is niet te verklaren uit componerende factoren, die haar doorzichtig zouden kunnen maken. We zagen reeds vroeger, dat elke poging in deze richting onvermijdelijk leidt tot de verontschuldiging...Juist het "zinloze" en "motief-loze" als *het* raadsel der zonde schakelt dit raadsel uit van de kring der vele geheimenissen, waarin we - op zoek naar het geheim! - zoeken door te dringen om ze in hun *zin* te ontraadselen. De zonde is het raadselachtige en onverklaarbare, omdat ze geen praesupposities heeft, geen oorzaak, geen motief (Berkouwer, *De Zonde I*, 125.)'.

⁴⁹¹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 157. Berkouwer is not convinced of the view that rejects the influence of sin on the essence of the Church. Raising the essence of the Church above the realm of the concrete life of the Church, which then does not really necessitate the serious and radical reformation, has been consistently professed by Rome. For instance, Berkouwer cites Ratzinger that the Church is no more "wie das alte Israel konditional, sondern absolut angenommen...: ihre Annahme und Nichtzurückweisung steht nicht mehr auf dem stets schwankenden Conditionalis der menschlichen Moralität (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 162.)". Küng and Rahner seem to be those Berkouwer notices to be with a different voice, since they willingly admit that the Church itself can be damaged through sin, the body of Christ stained, and the creature of the Holy Spirit upset, meaning that it is not merely individuals that are affected, but the Church itself that should be taken into account in relation to the influence of sin (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 166).

⁴⁹² Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 158-159.

⁴⁹³ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 160-161.

⁴⁹⁴ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 161.

⁴⁹⁵ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 204.

understanding of the continuity in terms of its self-evidence or *a priori* givenness does not explain the Israelites' cries in the face of the encountered discontinuity in their own eyes, owing to their sins and disobedience, despite the presence of the ark—the salvation of God in the past—or the presence of the temple.⁴⁹⁶ The modification of the concrete dealing of God with His people in correlation with the changeability of the Israelites sheds light on the nature of unchangeability of God, which was misperceived where God is not assumed to react in His unchangeability and strictness to all sorts of the changeability of one's own life in the context of continuity.⁴⁹⁷ The uniqueness of the continuity according to the Scripture is accompanied by the faith-response of the subject in the concrete situation of desperation, appealing to the faithfulness and mercifulness of God for renewal, which is the prayer emanated from the powerful trust in Him.⁴⁹⁸ This correlative continuity does not comply with the self-evident objectivistic view on continuity, which cannot accept the possibility of discontinuity because of sins, disobedience and spiritual digression.

Therefore, Berkouwer does not accept that it is possible to speak of continuity as if it is a guaranteed reality. The Roman Catholic Church heeds to the radical newness of the Church in the new covenant so much so that 'the possibility of apostasy' ('de mogelijkheid van de afval') is radically excluded.⁴⁹⁹ For example, Rahner affirms the distinction of the Church from the Israelites in terms of the possibility of her subjection to all kinds of 'rupture, discontinuity, and judgment' ('allerlei breuk en discontinuïteit, in gericht en oordeel'), for the Church's constitution exempts her from the possibility of falling into apostasy, through which she is endowed with the guarantee of indefectibility and infallibility. The Church, then, can be declared as 'an eschatological reality that can no longer fall from the truth and thus stands in the light of a mysterious continuity' 'because of the realised plan of God' ('vanwege God's *gerealiseerde* bedoelingen').⁵⁰⁰ As to the Reformed tradition, Berkouwer explains that the sense of 'a clear finality' (Endgültigkeit) is evident, since it is pronounced that 'Christ's work has been accomplished "once-for-all"'.⁵⁰¹ The relationship between promise and testing, however, is signposted in Bavinck's discussion of indefectibility, since he did not draw any rash conclusion, but rather seeks a concrete rendering of it. The concrete churches in their particularity in space and time are brought up in discussion since the churches in concreteness—"een bepaalde kerk in een bepaald land"—are not guaranteed of indefectibility as a given.⁵⁰²

⁴⁹⁶ Berkouwer points to expressions in Psalms, such as 'het Goddelijk vergeten, verstoten, verbergen en verlaten' (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 205.).

⁴⁹⁷ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 206.

⁴⁹⁸ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 205-206.

⁴⁹⁹ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 171, *De Kerk I*, 213.

⁵⁰⁰ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 172, *De Kerk I*, 213-214.

⁵⁰¹ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 172, *De Kerk I*, 214. W. Joest's remark is cited: "'Der Glaube der Kirche ist endgültig und unüberholbar darin, dass er der Anschulz an die zum Ziel des Reiches hin rettende Gottesgnade in Christus ist und diese verkündigt'" (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 214.).

⁵⁰² Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 215. Phrases such as "remnants" or Luther's concept 'the *ecclesia latens*' are called in to signpost their nature of critical testing of the Church, instead of self-aggrandisement or self-complacency as a way of spiritual elitism or sectarianism (Berkouwer, *The Church*, 185-188, *De Kerk I*, 230-233.). Moreover, the famous expressions '*ecclesia semper reformanda*' ("The Church is always in need of being reformed") and the amended '*ecclesia reformanda, quia reformata*' ("Because the Church has been reformed, she is always in need of being reformed") themselves cannot guarantee the true sense of continuity of the Church, since these could also well turn into 'human conclusions or *a priori* propositions' as well as 'what is confessed in it - and it can only be understood as a confession of guilt - cannot be localised *a priori* in the Church's periphery' (Berkouwer, *The Church*, 183, 187, *De Kerk I*, 231-232.). In other words, these expressions could deteriorate (ontaarden) as a self-excuse instead of 'a confession of guilt' (de schuldbelijdenis), whose realisation 'is related to renewal and implies the radical calling to be truly the Church' (Berkouwer, *The Church*, 187, *De Kerk I*, 232.).

In connection, the relationship between one Shepherd and one flock is featured only within the manner of care and admonition 'to hear, to remain, and to follow'.⁵⁰³ Also, the parable of 'branches of the vine' comprises rather than discounts the caution to "'abide in me'",⁵⁰⁴ whereby the correlative character is fully featured. Seemingly simply guaranteeing passages actually turn out to showcase their imperative dimensions. The continuity between the Old Testament and the New Testament in terms of 'the structure of admonition in salvation' is underlined, and it even 'becomes clearer in the new covenant, since the beginning "set in a new light by the Christ event"'.⁵⁰⁵ Thus, it is 'not a denial of continuity, but the rejection of a perverted continuity'.⁵⁰⁶ Expressions in 1 Corinthians 10 elucidate a 'salvation-historical typological connection'.⁵⁰⁷ The uniqueness and distinctness of God's way of attending to His people and the Church in His presence rebuts a concept of freedom which devitalises His threat. No indication is observable in the New Testament that the Church is allowed to have an entirely different position from the people of God in the Old Testament in terms of the 'structure of admonition'. Instead, 'there is a striking continuity here in the call to faith and obedience'.⁵⁰⁸

This concrete understanding of the Church in relation to the influence of sin is featured in Berkouwer's discussion on *simul justus et peccator* and the Church. *Simul justus et peccator*, first of all, calls for attention to its intended motif of seriousness, especially in Luther, in contrast to any line of miscomprehension of this formula in direction to spiritual defeatism, indecisive dialectics, or self-excuse.⁵⁰⁹ The seriousness of *simul* is correlated to the context of the life of the Church in "already" and "not yet". The imperative and indicative in the New Testament, not necessitating sin as necessity, implies the impossibility of the meaning of *simul* as the state of suspense of twofold balance somehow coordinated.⁵¹⁰ Berkouwer rejects formulating "not yet" in a structural way without the concrete living arena of battle and prayer, pointing at the Book of Hebrews Ch. 12 where "already" and "not yet" are not in opposition, but 'resisting sin to the point of shedding blood (12:4)' affirmatively 'ends finally in the reference, by discipline, to sharing in God's holiness (12:10)'.⁵¹¹ The movement towards renewal is the fundamental feature of the concept of *simul*, not spiritual idleness bulwarked by the futuristic "not yet" while overlooking the mandate for struggle in the earthly life. The *credo* is an appeal for action, in a sense that it can only come to be meaningful, unpretentious, and incontestable in every aspect only when the race (de wedloop)

⁵⁰³ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 171, *De Kerk I*, 212.

⁵⁰⁴ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 171, *De Kerk I*, 212.

⁵⁰⁵ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 175, *De Kerk I*, 223.

⁵⁰⁶ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 175, *De Kerk I*, 223.

⁵⁰⁷ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 175, *De Kerk I*, 223.

⁵⁰⁸ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 175-176, *De Kerk I*, 224.

⁵⁰⁹ Berkouwer explains that Luther, in the same vein with the traditional view on Romans 7, did not side with a defeatist view, as exemplified in his expression on the believer as the fighter, not as the defeated: 'de "Kämpfer zwischen zwei Gesetzen, nicht aber als ein Besiegter"' (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 172. ft. 117.). Berkouwer denounces the characterisation of the traditional view on Romans 7 in relation to Romans 8 as pessimist, because of its clear reference to Romans 7:25, and, at the same time, he also rejects that the new exegesis, largely represented by Berkouwer's citations of Herman Ridderbos' works *Aan de Romeinen* and *Paulus*, would be termed as optimist since, despite the emphasis on the tempering (matiging) of the tension of the dissension (tweespalt) between sinfulness and holiness, this discord still exists (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 172.). In general, Berkouwer seems to endorse the new exegesis of Romans 7 with its emphasis on the powerful constitutive reality of the Holy Spirit in His power and grace for the new life of believers in Christ (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 172.).

⁵¹⁰ Barth is cited here: '..."das Bild eines Ruhe oder Schwebezustandes eines Gleichgewichts zweierlei irgendwie koordinierter Zuständlichkeiten"' (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 177.).

⁵¹¹ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 354, *De Kerk II*, 178.

as well as the stirring towards conversion ('de "Erweckung zur Umkehr"') are exteriorised.⁵¹² Thus, the *simul* 'is connected to accusation, confession, and prayer, and its meaning is preserved only as long as it does not become a self-evident, generalising "formula of being" or an ascertainment of facts'.⁵¹³ "*Coram Deo*" of the nature of sin denounces the quantifying of sin, which Berkouwer calls minimalisation, and it can be pushed back only by the actual resistance to sins instead of being content with the state of cognitive contentment. In this connection, both legalistic perversion of the *simul* and antinomianistic self-justification on the ground of the necessity of remaining sin ('de "noodzakelijkheid" der "overblijvende" zonde') are sternly rebutted as caricatures.⁵¹⁴

Relatedly, Berkouwer turns down the notion of conflict-riddenness of the relationship between orthodoxy and orthopraxy, since such a fracture prefigures the peril concerning the witness of the truth, which is interrelated to apostolicity and holiness.⁵¹⁵ Berkouwer pays attention to the Decalogue, and says that if the Decalogue as the truth is understood, practiced, and applied in isolation in the sense of an 'agreement with a particular state of affairs and correctness in citing' it, the unacceptable dissension between orthodoxy and orthopraxy in words and deeds takes place, thereby giving way to the serious implausibility and incredulity of the proclaimed truth itself.⁵¹⁶ The truth of God never gets affected in its essence by humans, but as van der Woude claims, "'what is true - also God's truth - can, at particular moments, become a lie in the mouths of men'".⁵¹⁷ This quote delineates the correlative reality of the truth as proclaimed, and it is the line of understanding Berkouwer always holds on to. He refers to Romans 2:21-23 where Paul admonishes the preachers concerning their own life in accordance with what they are teaching,⁵¹⁸ and declares that, due to the dissonance between the contents of teaching and the life of preachers, God's name is blasphemed (Rom. 2:24). Therefore, the significance of *credo* cannot merely align with intellectual agreement but more importantly with 'struggle, prayer, and nostalgia', without which 'the Church's speaking becomes meaningless and unfruitful'.⁵¹⁹

Church discipline, especially that of heresy, is a significant practice of the Church for the concern of the holiness and purity in the life of the Church according to the truth of the gospel. Berkouwer argues, first and foremost, that the *scope* of discipline is restoration and repentance, as manifested in the love of God in His disciplining in the Scripture.⁵²⁰ Berkouwer recounts the Old and New Testament's revelation on the purpose of discipline in accordance with God's will. He notes the continuity of motif of discipline according to Heb. 12, which includes punishment ('de bestraffing en kastijding'), but is evidently directed to restoration, not condemnation.⁵²¹ It implicates that discipline is undoubtedly interconnected to the matter of the forgiveness of sins, and the teleology of the gospel as the forgiveness in the New Testament connotes the 'condemnation of and liberation from sin (cf. Rom. 6: John 8:11)'.⁵²²

⁵¹² Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 178.

⁵¹³ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 351, *De Kerk II*, 174.

⁵¹⁴ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 175.

⁵¹⁵ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 180-181.

⁵¹⁶ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 181-182.

⁵¹⁷ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 357, *De Kerk II*, 182.

⁵¹⁸ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 181.

⁵¹⁹ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 357, *De Kerk II*, 182.

⁵²⁰ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 191.

⁵²¹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 189-190.

⁵²² The expressions used by Berkouwer are 'veroordeeling van de zonde en met de bevrijding van de zonde' as indissolubly related to the forgiveness of sins and the mercy of God (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 186.). According to Berkouwer's clarification, in the OT and the NT, e.g. the case of Eli and the Corinthian church, there are occasions where tolerance is implemented in a way to relativise and minimise the evil and sins despite their destructiveness

The teleology of the gospel does not coincide with legalistic intolerance in the practice of discipline as well, for it darkens the outlook on the mercifulness and forgiveness of God.⁵²³ This version of intolerance takes only one possible way of tackling the sins and the evil—keeping distance. For this intolerance, ‘mercy and forgiveness are understood as tolerance of evil’, and Berkouwer does not find coherence between this perspective and ‘the whole New Testament’.⁵²⁴

Another crucial facet of discipline is *vox humana*, which entails the understanding of the limitedness of the horizon of human judgment. The acknowledgement of *vox humana* in the context of “already” and “not yet” resists drawing final judgment in predisposition to absolute separation of the holy Church in purity “already”.⁵²⁵ The undeniable ignorance or the limitedness of knowledge that humans have on others has made it difficult for the Church to pronounce a finalised and ultimate judgment: “De *intimis* non judicat ecclesia”.⁵²⁶ Additionally, the limitedness of discipline, for the reason that it takes place due to the sins and their spread within the Church, has another layer of correlation with discipliner’s own life.⁵²⁷ Without the correlation between the holiness of one’s own life and the implementation of discipline, disciplining is exposed to the danger of being assimilated to ‘pride, self-overestimation, and discrimination’, becoming an illegitimate stumbling block to the advance of the gospel of salvation.⁵²⁸ The correlative approach to discipline is interlinked to the personal level of confession of one’s own guilt before God, to the extent that he/she deserves to be subjected even to excommunication, which dismisses the possibility of human “addition” to discipline in its objectivity.⁵²⁹

Berkouwer also underscores that the empowerment that the Church receives from God does not work in isolation but is ‘a witness that corresponds to God’s judgment’, which involves the condition of conversion in light of His condemnation.⁵³⁰ Formalism and neutralism on the power of the keys in terms of judicial structure empowered from God is deemed thoroughly inadequate, but insinuates the necessity of judicial “addition” to the proclamation of the gospel, which is ‘the ruling authority of all things’.⁵³¹ For sure, any rebuttal of the empowerment and the practice of discipline should be dismissed, but the mechanical and automatic understanding of the empowerment in terms of givenness without the testing of the gospel should also be rejected.⁵³² Making the institution, empowerment, and authority as

(Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 184.). The evil here does not merely concern human beings as an anthropocentric view would see, but, most importantly, instigates the wrath and retribution of God (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 184.).

⁵²³ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 185-186.

⁵²⁴ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 360, *De Kerk II*, 186. Berkouwer clearly indicates the biblical truth concerning the nature of liberation: ‘De bevrijding in Christus werd getekend als het afsterven van de zonde, als het met Christus gekruisigd, gestorven en opgestaan zijn (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 187.)’.

⁵²⁵ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 192-195.

⁵²⁶ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 192-193.

⁵²⁷ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 204.

⁵²⁸ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 205-26.

⁵²⁹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 206.

⁵³⁰ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 371, *De Kerk II*, 199.

⁵³¹ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 372, *De Kerk II*, 201. In Berkouwer’s analysis, Sohm and Brunner’s critiques on Rome are not deemed sufficient, since they miss out the correlation of the empowerment, as intended by God, with the testing in line with His judgment (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 200-202.).

⁵³² Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 203. Testing has a critical function for the disciplining Church in Berkouwer’s account. It is clearly observable in his discussion on the subject of discipline and heresy as well (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 222-224.). Discipline, which does not negate the humanness involved in procedure (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 224-225.), does not stand in isolation or in self-sufficiency, but comes under the continuous testing of the gospel on its own life in words and deeds.

something controllable given impairs the harmony between love and empowerment, order, and institution.⁵³³

In association with his discussion on disciplining, Berkouwer examines the matter of heresy as well. He discerns the possibility of heresy not merely in a verbal, but more a holistic sense—life as a whole. The centrality of the motif of 'the pure proclamation of the gospel' should be fully taken into account, seeing the complexities and profound repercussions of the discipline of heresy.⁵³⁴ For this reason, the formalisation of confessions and discipline does not live up to the teleology of discipline.⁵³⁵ Such formalisation displays a purely intellectual procedure in accord with the verbal conformity to a set of doctrines. Whereas such intolerance does not plummet into the possible falsity of the stance of tolerance in which the indifferentism regarding the darkening of the gospel takes place, it still relapses into mechanic formalism, which does not function adequately against the real threats to the pure proclamation of the gospel in all forms.⁵³⁶ The minimised approach to the confession of faith in terms of verbal conformity only, expressed with *assensus* and *notitia*,⁵³⁷ is, therefore, to be deemed insufficient in avoiding the fatal danger that hovers over the realm of confession of the Church. What Berkouwer points out as a critical danger is making the confessional formulation an ecclesial law 'whereby faith stands or falls'. As an example, Berkouwer remarks that there have been commentaries on the Athanasian Creed that it does not go beyond the limitation as a formulation but rather stays within it as the Western expression of faith together with its own equipment and speculative elements.⁵³⁸ The approach of *assensus* alone on the ground of confession would add burdens quantitatively instead of pinpointing to

⁵³³ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 204.

⁵³⁴ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 305, *De Kerk II*, 211. Berkouwer takes note of the Scriptural references made by Arius and Apollinaris in support of their own theses, which he regarded as accommodating the Scriptural revelation to their own logic or sensibility (G. C. Berkouwer, *De Persoon van Christus* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1952), 51.). His evaluation seems correct, seeing that, in the example of Arius, one of the reasons why he could not accept ὁμοούσιος is because of his monotheistic belief in the Father, who, according to him, is the only Monad aside from whom there is none but the generated (G. L. Prestige, *God In Patristic Thought* (London: S. P. C. K., 1952), 210. See also, Francis Young, *The Making of The Creeds* (London: SCM Press, 2002), 46.). The objection also was raised, e.g. by Basil of Ancyra, that ὁμοούσιος, which was then used by Paul of Samosata, is the term previously condemned by the Council of Antioch in 268 (G. L. Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought*, 201-202.). Berkouwer also notifies this backdrop of ὁμοούσιος in the Nicaean context (Berkouwer, *De Persoon van Christus*, 47.). Another example is Arius' appeal to the employment of the Scriptural term for the creedal description, instead of ὁμοούσιος, which does not derive from the Scriptural source (Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History Of The Development Of Doctrine Vol. I, The Emergence of The Catholic Tradition, 100-600* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 210.). The use of ὁμοούσιος is explained by Berkouwer in terms of the urgency of situation—even Athanasius 'for many years showed a reluctance to use it'—and the disparity of context of Nicaean debate from that of Antioch in 268 as to the scope of debate (Berkouwer, *De Persoon van Christus*, 47-48. See also, J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds* (London: Longman, 1972), 243.). The rejection by the Churches of Arian and Apollinarian theses was based on its confession of faith on Christ "*vere deus - vere homo*" as its response and submission to the revelation concerning Christ, who is 'the object of faith in the New Testament (G. C. Berkouwer, *The Person of Christ*, trans. by John Vriend (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954), 178, *De Persoon van Christus*, 146.). Christological debate, as Berkouwer understands, is not a trivial matter or something that is to be lightly touched upon, but is correlated to the matter of salvation, the gospel of Jesus Christ (Berkouwer, *De Persoon van Christus*, 159.), as it goes with Athanasius' main concern, 'the conviction of redemption (J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (London: Continuum, 2001), 243.). Berkouwer expresses its sheer degree of significance by the designation of the Christological confession as the matter of the Church's "to be or not to be" (Berkouwer, *De Persoon van Christus*, 51.).

⁵³⁵ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 379, *De Kerk II*, 211.

⁵³⁶ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 211-212. In this connection, Berkouwer accepts Bavinck's notion of elasticity when it comes to the judgment of heresy. Berkouwer quotes Bavinck's words: "'Enige rekbaarheid in de zuiverheid van de bediening des Woords moet op Protestants standpunt wel aangewend worden, wijl anders schier alle gemeenschapsleven onmogelijk zou worden en het sectarisme op de verschrikkelijkste wijze zou worden gevoegd" (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 216)'. See also, Berkouwer, *Verontrusting en Verantwoordelijkheid*, 32-33.

⁵³⁷ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 123.

⁵³⁸ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 305-306, *De Kerk II*, 124, ft. 155.

the liberating gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ.⁵³⁹ Here, Berkouwer aims to maximise the meaningfulness of confession by re-examining the verbal-conformity-only-based approach according to the revelation of the Scripture where "the verblity" comes together with "the heart".⁵⁴⁰ Without the living faith, the confession concerning the truths might turn out to be the dead faith without the fruits of the Holy Spirit.⁵⁴¹ The Church with its confession stands before the testing of not only humans but also the Lord who commands them to make confession "coram hominibus".⁵⁴² Hence, the confession of the Church in its formulation is not an invincible fortress that keeps every danger outside, but might be exposed to serious dangers if it stands in isolation and in separation from the message of the gospel of salvation in correlation with the faith in the Lord. Berkouwer's maximising instead of minimising, therefore, points at the twofold-ness of reality that surrounds the confession of the Church: the concreteness and humanness of context of confessions as well as the correlative significance of the faith according to the gospel of salvation.

As far as the wholeness of discipline is concerned, catholicity has been linked with the discernment of heretical teachings due to their partiality, selectiveness, one-sidedness, and even distortion.⁵⁴³ Berkouwer discerns the dissimilarity between the contemporary context and the New Testament time when Paul ministered to the churches. For Paul, a judgment on heresy hinged much more on the problem of apostasy, dispossessing 'the outlook on the crucified Christ (cf. Gal. 3:1)' and thereby resulting in the fabrication of another gospel. The expressions used for description are such as 'apostasy from the apostolic truth' and 'another gospel that radically obscures the truth of salvation (II Cor. 11:4; Gal. 1:6)'.⁵⁴⁴ Accordingly, it is indicated that 'Paul is not concerned with partial aspects, but with the transformation of the truth (the appeal to the law of God)', as seen in Galatians, counteracting 'the preaching of the cross'.⁵⁴⁵ Berkouwer examines that 'the analysis of heresy today touches on historical-ecclesiastical developments, different insights into the truth of God, and confessional contrasts'.⁵⁴⁶ Hence, there must be caution, in the scope of catholicity in a quantitative and qualitative sense, to stand against 'one-sidedness, choice, preference, and selection' as well as premature condemnation of others.⁵⁴⁷

For sure, limitless tolerance is sternly refuted. Bavinck's concern, which determines the nature of error of heresy, according to Berkouwer, is 'the substance of truth which should set the boundary' ('de substantie der waarheid, die altijd de grenzen moet bepalen'), and it refers to the gospel of the salvation, the Church's foundation.⁵⁴⁸ Berkouwer, in agreement, elucidates that 'the Church is not a school of philosophy but a proclaimer of good news'.⁵⁴⁹ Only when the gospel is understood by the Church in accordance with its intended meaningfulness—the joyful message of salvation, and the Church 'throws open all the gates in the proclamation'—the single intolerance that is possible in the Church is to be transparently disclosed.⁵⁵⁰ Only on

⁵³⁹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 124.

⁵⁴⁰ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 125-126.

⁵⁴¹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 126-127.

⁵⁴² Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 127.

⁵⁴³ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 142.

⁵⁴⁴ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 117-118, *De Kerk I*, 142-143.

⁵⁴⁵ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 117, *De Kerk I*, 142.

⁵⁴⁶ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 118, *De Kerk I*, 143.

⁵⁴⁷ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 118-119, *De Kerk I*, 143-144.

⁵⁴⁸ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 217.

⁵⁴⁹ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 384, *De Kerk II*, 217.

⁵⁵⁰ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 389, *De Kerk II*, 224.

this condition, the purity, which has been deployed in the context of ecclesial dividedness in terms of introversion and mutual rejection without the knowledge of consequences, can be spoken of in its true sense.⁵⁵¹

On the mission of the Church, Berkouwer dispels the idea that positions the mission of the Church on the secondary level to its essence or being, since the Lord's commission to the Church for mission derives from its being 'the light of the world, a city set on a hill, and the salt of the earth (Matt. 5:13f.)'.⁵⁵² The separation (afzondering) of the Church, which, in spite of its essentiality and sheer significance, can easily lead to isolationism, can retain its meaningfulness only when it is correlated to its mission, reaching out to the world and witnessing.⁵⁵³ The newness of the reality of the Church in the Holy Spirit is indicative of its calling for mission, and it does not function as self-explanation, but, due to the strong probability of its miscomprehension and the laxity in the life of the Church, exists together with the imperative of the commission of the Lord.⁵⁵⁴ This mission is not to be made an amalgam with other motives—as was the case in the past with colonialism and imperialism—for the reason that such an admixture brings forth another gospel.⁵⁵⁵ The genuine meaning of mission points at its unbiased-ness and conviction as the gospel pleas for 'repentance and conversion (metanoia, omkeer, bekering)'.⁵⁵⁶ The mission of the Church can only take place when it, in its imitation of Christ, sees the mystery of divine compassion for the lost, not like Jonah or the Pharisees, but as a bearer of His saving will towards the world.⁵⁵⁷

In the gospel-centredness, the goal of mission is making disciples (Mat. 28:19), and every other motive is empty and without direction. And yet, individual conversion and personal transformation are not to be undermined for the sake of the so-called wider scope of mission.⁵⁵⁸ The centrality of the gospel in mission in no way suggests the approach based on reductionistic or pessimistic view on the current world, but is reminded of the Lord's enthronement as well as victory over the powers and the life of believers in the world therein.⁵⁵⁹ For this reason, the widened horizon does not justify the replacement of the gospel into something else, e.g. so-called "social gospel", for the sake of the broader concern, but it rather denotes that the possibility of drawing inspiration from the gospel for public concern, such as the concept of justice in the political arena.⁵⁶⁰

Relatedly, Berkouwer regards creating the dilemma between "proclamation (verkondiging)" and "presence (presentie)" illegitimate, as Christian witness 'comes to expression' in the meaningful presence of the Church and, at the same time, the meaning of the latter is unveiled

⁵⁵¹ It is strongly stated that the discourse on purity seems quite lacking under the impression of the unity of the Church in Christ ('onder de indruk van de eenheid der kerk in Christus') (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 224.). Berkouwer continues: 'Er is slechts één mogelijkheid het te hervinden in zijn diepe zin en klank en het dan niet prijs te geven (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 224.)'.

⁵⁵² Berkouwer, *The Church*, 391-393, *De Kerk II*, 226-228.

⁵⁵³ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 227.

⁵⁵⁴ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 230.

⁵⁵⁵ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 235-236.

⁵⁵⁶ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 399, *De Kerk II*, 237.

⁵⁵⁷ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 238-239.

⁵⁵⁸ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 248-249. For Berkouwer, there cannot be a new motif of mission, and, in relation, he regards the new emphasis on trinitarianism in *Missio Dei* to be acceptable only if it rejects a wrong kind of christocentrism (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 231.). This remark appears to have a reserved tone to *Missio Dei* and trinitarianism in missiology, as he does not see any other scope of mission than that of repentance and conversion through the one gospel of Jesus Christ.

⁵⁵⁹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 250.

⁵⁶⁰ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 251.

in the former.⁵⁶¹ Seeing the criticism that the Church lacks genuine attention to the actual need in the world, but is only concerned about 'the conversion of the souls (de bekering der zielen)',⁵⁶² Berkouwer points out the contrast between the Church and Jesus 'Who was full of compassion for men in need, in all their blindness and deafness, sickness and hunger, threat and death in the midst of all the powers (Heb. 2:14)'.⁵⁶³ The real meaningfulness of the presence derives from the understanding that it is deemed as a reflection of genuine *diakonia* of Jesus Christ in the life and service of the Church on the basis of the knowledge of the precedent life of Jesus Himself.⁵⁶⁴ Meanwhile, the centrality of the gospel is not forgotten, but, on the ground of correlative perspective, it is brought within the context of genuine presence, from which proclamation sets off, thereby manifesting the contents of preaching not only in words but also in deeds.⁵⁶⁵

3.3. Conclusion

Berkouwer's ecclesiology in *De Kerk I, II* is situated against the backdrop of his ecumenical engagement, especially considering the maturity of his theological as well as ecclesiological thought later in his career when it was published. Berkouwer's theological interaction with other voices shows forth nothing less than dynamic character with substantial theological exchanges concerning various dogmatic subjects. When it comes to ecclesiology, his interaction with Rome and his involvement with the New Delhi Assembly of the World Council of Churches concern the fundamental ecclesiological subjects such as the nature of the dogmas of the Church, the relationship between dogmas and unity, the centrality of the gospel in correlation to the Church, the authority of the Scripture in relation to that of the tradition and so forth. Especially, his participation in the Second Vatican Council as an observer and the subsequent publications on the Council reveal his later ecclesiological perspective.

In regards to the unity of the Church in *De Kerk I, II*, the distinct character of Berkouwer's discussion is that he perceives it in the dynamic of gift and calling in the divine-human reality of the life of the Church. His focal point is the interconnectedness of the unity of the Church with the one witness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, underscoring the "centre" question concerning the radical newness of fellowship in Christ through the Holy Spirit: *unio cum Christo*. The "centre" question has soteriological implications—the common faith and salvation in Jesus Christ—and it resists approaches with "plus" as well as "minus" of the commonality of faith. He relatedly disputes confessional traditionalism and subjectivistic reductionism or relativism due to the twofold nature of legitimate confession: rightness and relevance. This viewpoint emerges through the outlook on the concreteness of the life of the Church and its confessions as well as the testing force of the gospel of Jesus Christ according to the Scripture. Explaining away the status quo of division via theological objectivism or subjectivism cannot be vindicated when such attempt is tested by the penetrating light of the intention of God for the Church in one Lord and Shepherd. The radical newness of fellowship in Christ is the very reason for unrest about disunity in reality, and, at the same time, the appeal for faithful response to the calling for unity in Him.

⁵⁶¹ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 413, *De Kerk II*, 253.

⁵⁶² Berkouwer, *The Church*, 413, *De Kerk II*, 252.

⁵⁶³ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 413, *De Kerk II*, 252.

⁵⁶⁴ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 252.

⁵⁶⁵ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 255. In relation, Berkouwer underscores the interrelatedness between proclamation and dialogue. The seriousness of the reality of human encounter/contact (menselijk contact) in the person's contextual peculiarities in concrete life in proclamation and dialogue pinpoints the importance of reflection on the mode and meaning of dialogue. Proclamation cannot ignore dialogue if it takes into account the reality of human encounter (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 256-257.).

What is noticeable in Berkouwer's account on unity is that he does not move towards a static ontological discourse, but, instead, delves into the religious sphere of unity in light of the gospel in its correlative nature. The emphasis is endowed on, in place of exhaustive ontological definition, the relational nature of the Church in that every bit of account on the Church unity can only stem from its fundamental relatedness to Christ through faith in its divine-human life in the fullness and radicality of indicatives and imperatives. By doing so, his ecclesiological discription of unity manages to obtain the sense of concreteness and to address the actual guilt within the current disunity of the Church along with due holy impatience for unity.

On holiness, the prominent feature in Berkouwer's discussion is that, in keeping with the normativity of the Scriptural revelation, the gospel of Jesus Christ and the faith of the Church in correlation are posited at the centre of the discourse. Holiness is depicted in basic association with its *Vorverständnis* that it brings up immediately, including purity, perfection, and being freed from evil and corruption. This basic conception of holiness does not signify legalistic viewpoint, but is closely related to the newness of life in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. The newness of life also signifies that there are deeper meanings to holiness, which are essentially characterised by the gospel of the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ and further exemplified by *imitatio Christi* and discipleship. This designation not only intimates a strong weight on the calling for faith and obedience in view of the newness in Christ, but also the concreteness of the intended arena of the manifestation of holiness on earth. In accord with the acknowledgement of the current state of "already, but not yet" before the eschaton, the calling for the visibility of holiness is emphasised along with the stress on "already" in the life of the Church, which is explained with the concept of *fascinans* in its correlative nature in the light of the gospel. *Credo* is taken seriously in the involvement of faith, and the Scripture in its normativity penetrates into the life of the Church with promise and testing (or gift and calling). The Church's negligence or indifference to sins and evil are strongly rebutted and the Church is radically and urgently called to repentance. Both objectivistic and subjectivistic approaches are rejected, as the penetrating light of the gospel of Jesus Christ in its correlative nature is not fully manifested in such lines of discourse. The correlative nature of the gospel does not comply with mere theoretical perfection, but, with its normative and existentially testing authority, delves into the religious sphere of the actual and concrete life of the Church.

[Chapter 4: Unity and Holiness of the Church in Korean Context]

As the dissertation has paid focal attention to the ecclesiological inquiry into the unity and holiness of the Church, the direction of the chapter as a whole needs to be more steered to the ecclesiological analysis that has weight and relevance to Korean context. Relevant historical and contextual backgrounds will be offered in reference to their close relatedness to the topic of unity and holiness. As to the scope of ecclesiological discussion, the target group for not only contextual, but also textual analysis needs to have an important position in the Korean Christianity—at least in Protestantism—and also have the most theological relevance. In this regard, it is undoubtedly the Presbyterian churches that stand out among other Protestant groups due to not only the size of their bodies, but also the continuous theological chasm between the conservative and progressive churches, the former with a strong commitment to the Reformed theology and the latter with a strong ecumenical conviction. This theological gap has contributed greatly to the prolonged rift between the conservative and progressive churches and has led to their differing persuasions in doctrinal positions and Christian piety. It is crucial to delve into ecclesiological beliefs and principles of polarised theological camps with an eye on the basis, structure, content, and conviction. Accordingly, after the relevant contextual background is explained, the ecclesiological perspectives of three theologians who have written on the Church—Young-yup Cho, Jang-hyun Ryu, and Hong-seok Choi—will be investigated in order to acquire an understanding of their perspective on the unity and holiness of the Church for further discussion.

4.1. Contextual Background

Though there exist many possible angles through which an ecclesiological investigation can be carried out in the Korean churches, as far as the contemporary issue of the unity and holiness of the Church is concerned, the dispute over the World Council of Churches offers the undeniably most relevant context. To narrow down the scope, the most recent and relevant context for ecclesiology would be the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Busan in South Korea in 2013, as it reignited the core ecclesiological debate particularly concerning the unity and purity of the Church.⁵⁶⁶ Numerous conservative theologians in Korea addressed reasons for their refusal of the ecumenical movement led by the WCC. The central matter for disagreement was the significance and necessity of the preservation of the purity of the Church in doctrines and practices. The supporters of the WCC attempted to persuade conservative Christians by accentuating the priority of unity as the mandate from the Lord. They also criticised theological fundamentalism for barricading the passage to Christian unity that they assumed to be supported by the conservatives.⁵⁶⁷ Nonetheless, the conservative

⁵⁶⁶ Doctrinal and ethical matters are reported to be the primary point of opposition by the majority of Korean Christians (Cf. Sung-deuk Oak, "Protestantism Comes East: The Case of Korea", in *Protestantism after 500 Years*, ed. by Thomas Albert Howard and Mark A. Noll (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 253.). They have constantly put forth their criticism against the WCC as they regard it being a stumbling block to 'the ministry of the gospel of the Lord' ('주님의 복음 사역') (Jun-mo Jeong, "A Critique on the Religious Pluralism of the WCC" ["WCC 종교다원주의 비판"], in *What's the Difference between WCC and Us? [WCC는 우리와 무엇이 다른가?]* (Seoul: The General Assembly of Presbyterian Church in Korea, 2011), 218, ft. 2.). Byung-ho Moon decries the way in which the WCC portrays the Korean churches. Moon thinks that the Korean churches are not understood correctly by the WCC, as it positively assesses the coexistence of denominations and religions in the nation. He maintains that a more accurate characteristic should rather be the thoroughgoing effort of evangelism on the basis of the biblical and evangelical faith (Byung-ho Moon, *'Uniting' of the Church and 'Unity' of the Doctrine*, [교회회의 '하나됨'과 교리의 '하나임'] (Seoul: Jipyung Book Pub. [지평서원], 2012), 31-32.).

⁵⁶⁷ Won-young Son suggests that the Korean churches should discard the fundamentalist theology and become more 'open and inclusive' ('개방적이고 포용적') and more dialogue-oriented towards cultures and other religions. The openness and inclusivity also applies to the churches' relationship with other churches from different traditions. Son believes that it is actually the problem of rigid and exclusive paradigms that makes him think that the fundamentalist theology should be abandoned, as it increasingly loses its relevance and plausibility in the

theologians were not persuaded by the pro-WCC theologians' requisition and continued their opposition to the WCC.

The objection from the conservative Christians to the WCC, in fact, reflects their conservative Reformed faith and theology shared by the majority of Korean Protestant believers.⁵⁶⁸ They have constantly taken a critical stance on new attempts at reshaping the existent doctrinal or ethical belief system. As a way of holding on to their Christian identity, they have sternly resisted doctrinal and ethical compromise that might undermine the contents of the historical creeds and the core doctrines of the Reformed theology.⁵⁶⁹ The pervasive normativity of the conservative Reformed theology in the context of modern theological discourse in Korea exists together with the appeal to the correctness and uprightness of faith and theology in accordance with the historical creeds and the Scripture. At the same time, the framework of theological normativity of the majority has been continuously opposed by the minority group of a more liberal theological stance, especially in relation to the doctrine of biblical inerrancy. Here, the tense relationship between the two opposing theological patterns in the Korean context seems to be polarised rather than interactive or dialogical. Yim detects influence of the philosophical realism of the Neo-Confucian epistemology on Korean Christianity, especially among the conservatives in their dogmatic exclusivism—with the claim on the right interpretation of the Scripture—and their preference for being identified as "orthodox" rather than liberal.⁵⁷⁰ However, the claim on "orthodoxy" in terms of "soundness" and "correctness" does not seem to be the conservatives' preoccupation alone but be shared by the non-conservatives by means of their own divergent principles for such contention. This distinct characteristic of socio-cultural dimension of the theological discourse hangs together with the sheer significance of the normative (and universal/common) discourse on faith and theology in argumentation for normativity and subsequently in the acceptance of the apriority of a certain system of belief in rejection/exclusion of conflicting arguments.⁵⁷¹

newly shifted paradigms of thinking in the surrounding world. (Won-young Son, *Theopraxis Ecclesiology*, 223-226, 234-236.). See also, Sang-gyu Lee, "WCC in the Korean Church—The Cause for Division, A Stumbling Block to Unity (trans. by the author)" ["한국교회에서의 WCC—분열의 원인, 통합의 걸림돌"], in *Is WCC A Real Church Union Movement?* (trans. by the author) [*WCC, 참된 교회 연합 운동인가?*] (Suwon: Yungeumsa, 2012), 109-110.).

⁵⁶⁸ Cf. Timothy S. Lee, "Beleaguered Success: Korean Evangelicalism in the Last Decade of the Twentieth Century", in *Christianity in Korea*, ed. by Robert E. Buswell and Timothy S. Lee (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 335. See also, *Gallup Korea, Religion in Korea 1984-2014* (Seoul: Gallup Korea, 2015), 37-38.

⁵⁶⁹ Lee gives an account of early Korean Christians' religious context and the essential nature of their Christian faith that formed their religious identity, which is about worshipping the true Triune God. He critiques the attempts of metamorphosing the Christian faith through culturalisation, pluralisation, and accommodation in the present context. He is convinced that the church has to keep the contents of the biblical faith together with Paul and forefathers who suffered under suppression because of their faith in Christ. He calls for 'an apostolic, biblical, and eschatological theology' in this sense (Seung-goo Lee, "Christian Identity in the Korean Context", in *Christian Identity (Studies in Reformed Theology)*, ed. by Eduardus Van der Borgh (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 375-384, 389-391.).

⁵⁷⁰ Sungbin Yim, *Public Theology for Korean Church and Society* [21세기 한국사회와 공공신학] (Seoul: Presbyterian College and Theological Seminary Press, 2017), 149-152. And yet, Yim perceives that, by adopting Weber's phrase, it shows rather "elective affinity" between Christianity and the local culture ('기독교와 토착 문화 사이의 선택적 유착'), seeing that the very adherence to orthodoxy has ended up in the division of the churches, which digresses from the ideal of harmony in hierarchical order (Sungbin Yim, *Public Theology for Korean Church and Society*, 151-152.).

⁵⁷¹ Ogura observes that the "uprightness" and "correctness"—entailing the fundamental significance of morality for agreement—of the common/universal norm in Korean culture and society display not a static, but a dynamic character, seeing the continuous debates for normativity in the history of the nation particularly from the Chosun dynasty—the ascending-descending movement of dissenting discourses in hierarchical structure (Kizo Ogura, *Korea Is A Single Philosophy: Korean Society Interpreted by Li (理) and Ki (氣)* (trans. by the author) [한국은 하나의 철학이다: 리와 기로 해석한 한국사회], trans. by Sunghwan Cho (Seoul: Mosinsaram, 2017), 13-

In this vein, the conservatives' counteraction to the WCC unveils the layers of theological polarisation that have been formed and exemplified through several critical historical instances. For example, the most well-known and crucial instance among them is the controversy over the Shinto shrine worship under Japanese control that influenced the first schism of the Ko-shin Church in 1952.⁵⁷² The Japanese government ordered in 1935 that every Korean person including Christians should attend the Shinto rituals and join Shinto worship. It put heavy pressures on the Korean churches as they were forced to determine their stance in compliance to the order. The Presbyterians did not accept the interpretation of the shrine worship as a mere national rite, but perceived it as an essentially religious matter that aims at the heart of the Christian faith.⁵⁷³ Just as Lee depicts, the fundamental motive of Gi-cheol Ju's persistence in noncompliance from 1938 to 1944 was to keep the purity of his faith and the holiness of the Church,⁵⁷⁴ even at the cost of imprisonment, tortures and eventual death in prison. The confessors sensed that the First and Second Commandments of God were directly violated by the shrine worship, the attitude of which demonstrates the non-compromising belief in the authority of the Scripture as 'the only guide for faith and life'.⁵⁷⁵ Nevertheless, in subsequence to increasingly severe pressures and threats, the Presbyterian Church of Korea officially submitted to the order in 1938, while remaining confessors still held on to their conviction.⁵⁷⁶ The result was that 'about two thousand Protestants were arrested for noncompliance, and as many as fifty people died as martyrs as a result of incarceration and torture' between 1938 and 1945.⁵⁷⁷

The confessors, after the liberation, demanded strict repentance from the non-confessors for defecting from the faith. Ha offers an English translation of the five articles of 'the basic reconstruction guideline of the Presbyterian Church of Korea suggested by the confessors:

First, 'church leaders (pastor and elder) will minister after repentance and purification'. Second, 'pastors will undertake self-reproach and suspension for at least two months from office'. Third, 'during pastor and elder's absence deacons will lead worship service'. Fourth, 'this principle will be spread to all Presbyteries

87, 174, 249-251.). He perceives this phenomenon as a distinct socio-cultural characteristic of the Koreans that is expressed in the various fields of life, including religions (Kizo Ogura, *Korea Is A Single Philosophy*, 123-125.).

⁵⁷² The Ko-shin Church was created after the separate presbytery emerged in opposition to the Kyung-nam presbytery, which was led by the group of people who did not reject the Shinto worship and sided with the Japanese government. Originally, the leadership of the Ko-shin Church differed from the restoration movement, as the former desired to reform the Korean churches from within whereas the latter tried to do it by means of separation. Its main motive was to reestablish the conservative Reformed doctrines and church as well as the orthodox Reformed faith for the nation and the churches (Cf. Deok-Joo Rhie, 'Theological Conflicts and Division of the Korean Presbyterian Church in the Post-Liberation Era', *Christianity and History in Korea* (44), (2016), 120-128.). The Ko-shin Church still forms one of the mainline Presbyterian denominations in Korea.

⁵⁷³ Cf. Jaegwon Ha, 'Unity and Catholicity in the Korean Presbyterian Church: An Ecumenical Reformed Assessment', Ph.D Thesis, (University of Pretoria, 2015), 96. See also, Young-jae Kim, *A History of Korean Church* [한국교회사] (Suwon: Hapshin University Press, 2009), 248.

⁵⁷⁴ Sang-gyoo Lee, "Reverend Ju Gi-Cheol: The Man Who Loved only God for His Lifetime", in *Korean Christian Leaders Series - Ju Gi-Cheol: Essential Writings (Selected by The Korean Institute for Advanced Theological Studies)* (Seoul: The KIATS Press, 2008), 14, 20.

⁵⁷⁵ Sang-gyoo Lee, "Reverend Ju Gi-Cheol: The Man Who Loved only God for His Lifetime", 21. See also, Ung-Kyu Pak, *Millennialism in the Korean Protestant Church* (New York: Peter Lang, 2005), 191-192.

⁵⁷⁶ 'Their General Assembly in 1938 was flooded with armed police, who compelled the moderator to propose a motion approving Shinto rites. The delegates dared not protest, and the vote was passed (Alec Rylie, *Protestants: The Radicals Who Made the Modern World*, (London: William Collins, 2017), 374.)'.

⁵⁷⁷ James Huntley Grayson, "A Quarter-Millennium of Christianity in Korea", in *Christianity in Korea*, ed. by Robert E. Buswell and Timothy S. Lee (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 16-17. See also, Yong-gyu Park, *History of the Korean Church II (1910-1960)*, 676-731.

and churches in the country to practice it'. Fifth, 'a theological seminary for education of pastor candidates will be restored'.⁵⁷⁸

The refusal by the majority was accompanied by a justification for their compliance,⁵⁷⁹ and it spearheaded the nascence of a separate denomination made up of confessors who were very small in number—the Presbyterian Church of Korea (Ko-shin).⁵⁸⁰ As mentioned above, the confessors' noncompliance to the forced shrine worship discloses their conviction that the matter of participation connotes nothing less than whether the purity of faith and the holiness of the Church are preserved or seriously disintegrated, which are compressed into the real confession of the Kingship and Lordship of Jesus Christ.⁵⁸¹ This unbending stance, moreover, was accompanied by the firm belief in the inerrancy of the Scripture. Concerning the prevalence of evangelical faith in early Korean churches, Lee explains:

'Numerous authors have found the missionaries to be decidedly Evangelical... Largely because of the influence of missionaries... and the Korean church leaders, biblical inerrancy has reigned supreme in Korean Protestantism'.⁵⁸²

Against this backdrop, posterior to the emergence of Ko-shin in 1952, numerous other divisions would follow. The separation of Ki-jang in 1953 was triggered by the dismissal of Jae-joon Kim for his denial of the very inerrancy of the Scripture in every respect, which is promulgated in the Twelve Articles of Faith of the Presbyterian Church adopted in 1907.⁵⁸³ The division between Hap-dong and Tong-hap in 1959 occurred from the dispute over joining the membership of the WCC in 1950s.⁵⁸⁴ Those occasions were the initial divisions of major denominations that still exist as mainline church bodies. Subsequently, from the mid 1970s, various pastors detached themselves from their denomination (Hap-dong) for the sake of renewal and reform, causing numerous successive church divisions.⁵⁸⁵ The mushrooming of

⁵⁷⁸ Jaegeon Ha, 'Unity and Catholicity', 98. See also, Yong-gyu Park, *History of the Korean Church II (1910-1960)*, 804.

⁵⁷⁹ Yong-gyu Park, *History of the Korean Church II (1910-1960)*, 734-735.

⁵⁸⁰ Cf. Myung-hyuk Kim, 'Christian Unity and Reconciliation in the Korean Context', 36. For the Methodist churches, the shrine worship was the initial reason for division, as those who worked for the Japanese government during the colonial time still possessed the power in the denomination. The divided groups were reunited in 1949. A constitutional dispute caused a second schism in 1954, but it was restored in 1959, and the matter of the election of the office of the episcopacy provoked another schism into three groups, but they came together again in 1978. As concerns the Holiness churches, the issue of joining the World Council of Churches became a dividing factor in 1961, and the divided groups—Ki-sung and Ye-sung—still exist separately aside from the Nazarene group (Na-sung) (Cf. Young-jae Kim, *A History of Korean Church*, 294-296, 309-310.).

⁵⁸¹ Young-Jae Kim, *A History of Korean Church*, 248.

⁵⁸² Timothy S. Lee, "Beleaguered Success: Korean Evangelicalism in the Last Decade of the Twentieth Century", 331-333.

⁵⁸³ 'The Old and New Testament are the Word of God, and they are the sole infallible rule for the faith and duties thereof' ('신구약 성경은 하나님의 말씀이니 신앙과 본분에 대하여 정확무오한 유일의 법칙이다') (*The Twelve Articles of Faith of the Presbyterian Church of Korea*, Art. 1.). See also, Cf. Jaegeon Ha, 'Unity and Catholicity', 158. To see more detailed discussion, cf. Yong-gyu Park, *History of the Korean Church II (1910-1960)*, 926-952.

⁵⁸⁴ Jaegeon Ha, 'Unity and Catholicity', 116-119. See also, Yong-gyu Park, *History of the Korean Church II (1910-1960)*, 970-1011. Despite the definite involvement of the church-politics and power struggles in the context of controversy, it is essentially the increased theological divergence that became underlining driving force to the eventual schism (Cf. Yong-gyu Park, *History of the Korean Church II (1910-1960)*, 990-995.). Tong-hap denomination was in favour of the ecumenical movement of the World Council of Churches, which Hap-dong denomination rejected. Presbyterian University and Theological Seminary is affiliated with Tong-hap, whereas Chong-shin theological seminary is with Hap-dong.

⁵⁸⁵ Young-Jae Kim, *A History of Korean Church* [한국의교회사], 385. More than 170 denominations have been established in the Protestant churches in Korea (Ref. G.-S. Han et al, "Serving Two Masters": Protestant Churches in Korea and Money', *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* 9 (4) (2009), 350.)

segregated denominations has been accompanied by the increase in the number of new seminaries.⁵⁸⁶

To speak in a bit more detail, in the case of Ko-shin in 1952, theological justification for the schism stemmed from the conviction of the legitimacy of establishing the pure and uncorrupted Church. In the schism of Ki-jang, it sprang from a theological debate on the inspiration of the Holy Scripture, which made Jae-joon Kim expelled from ministry and the graduates of Cho-sun Seminary banned from ministry at the General Assembly in the post-independence context of 1952.⁵⁸⁷ The supporters of Cho-sun seminary established a separate assembly in 1953 and named the new denomination “The Presbyterian Church of the Republic of Korea”, whose abbreviated version in Korean is “Ki-jang”.⁵⁸⁸ In 1959, it was the motif of preserving theological identity in terms of doctrines and practices and the disagreements on the justifiability of prioritisation of the purity or visible unity of the Church. It needs be stated, however, that all the ecclesiastical events point out the evident doctrinal and confessional understanding of purity and holiness, which has been continuously maintained with austerity. For sure, the specific religious and theological motives behind the occasions are distinguished from each other, mainly due to the particularity of the historical and ecclesiastical contexts that led to different accents and emphases in response, but the complete and fixated adherence to the Reformed confessions—especially as expressed in the Westminster Confession of Faith—and the central place of the absolute and sole normativity of the Scripture have largely represented the core meaning of doctrinal purity in the Korean Reformed context. Since then, theological views among divided denominations have become almost irreconcilably polarised according to confessional identities until the present. For instance, against the backdrop of the national industrialisation and democratisation in the second half of the twentieth century, new theological movements—contextual theologies—such as ‘the gospel of holistic blessing’ and Minjung Theology have showcased the deep layers of existing theological disparity between the conservative and progressive theologians.⁵⁸⁹

⁵⁸⁶ Timothy S. Lee, “Beleaguered Success”, 341. The idea of ‘an indigenised Confucianism’ in terms of the “in-group loyalty” and “filial piety” has been spoken of in the context of discussing the solidification of clerical hierarchism in the congregational settings (G.-S. Han et al, “Serving Two Masters’: Protestant Churches in Korea and Money”, 343.). However, it needs be asserted that such mentality is influential and pervasive also in seminaries and denominational affiliations.

⁵⁸⁷ Jae-joon Kim criticised and even condemned the adherents of biblical inerrancy and ensuing debates (Yong-gyu Park, *History of the Korean Church II (1910-1960)*, 946.). Jae-Joon Kim’s affiliation towards Karl Barth’s dialectical understanding of the authority of the Scripture came in conflict with Hyung-Ryong Park from 1930s to 1950s who was educated under J. Gresham Machen, so called ‘the paragon of American Fundamentalism’ (Timothy S. Lee, “Beleaguered Success”, 344.).

⁵⁸⁸ Cf. Young-Jae Kim, *The History of the Korean Church*, 303.

⁵⁸⁹ Sebastian C. H. Kim, “The Word and the Spirit: Overcoming Poverty, Injustice and Division in Korea”, in *Christian Theology in Asia*, ed. by Sebastian C. H. Kim (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 150-151. Kim provides his assessment that the evaluation of particular theologies developed in Korea, such as Minjung Theology or dogmatic conservative theology, has been mostly done one-sidedly either by opponents or by proponents. There have also been voices that strive for finding common grounds or going over the dividedness via mutual learning (Sebastian C. H. Kim, “The Word and the Spirit: Overcoming Poverty, Injustice and Division in Korea”, 150-151.). And yet, the gap between the two groups has become deeper and larger with the emergence of Minjung Theology as it was seen by the evangelicals to be a shift of the centre of theology from ‘the traditional confessions of the Church’ to ‘the point of view that human history is a history of conflict and struggle between the ruling class and the ruled’ so that theology does not hold a meaning if it does not cope with social issues (Yung-jae Kim, “An Historical Survey of the Church and Theology of the Reformed Tradition in Korea”, in *Vicissitudes of Reformed Theology in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by George Harinck and Dirk van Keulen (Zoetermeer: Meinema, 2004), 284-285. See also, Young-yup Cho, *Biblical Answers on Facing Issues in the Church and Society* [교회와 사회의 당면 문제들에 대한 성경적 해답] (Seoul: Book Communication, 2015), 179-196.). Ryu understands that Minjung Theology transcends the institutional Church that proclaims an individually oriented de-politicised gospel as well as socialistic revolution that would stimulate the ‘vicious circle of countless revenges’ (‘무한한 복수의 악순환’) by uniting the two facets. Minjung Theology’s rejection of institutionalism, clericalism, theologism, and biblicism points at its motif of restoring the eschatological-liberating community that bases itself on the liberating

On a practical level, since the revival in 1907, the religious-ethical life as an expression of genuine conversion has continuously formed the normative characteristic of the Christian life for the majority of believers. The imperatives therein involve leading a visibly devotional and distinct moral life, which typically consists of the thoroughly evangelical confession, Sunday worship attendance, participation in weekly church meetings, joining the dawn prayer on a regular basis, giving generously to the congregation, being active in evangelism, leading a smoke- and alcohol-free life, not gambling, working honestly and industriously, being sexually loyal to one's spouse, et cetera.⁵⁹⁰ The personal and religious-ethical understanding of and drive towards a pious life in a puritanical sense have been combined with the adherence to the conviction in the infallible authority of the Scripture as the sole rule of Christian life in faith.

Against this background, in the particular context of the WCC Assembly at Busan in 2013, it turns out that the most focal point of disputes was on prioritising the purity or unity of the Church amid the ecumenical endeavour. The concern centred around the question of theological justifiability of preserving the pure or right doctrines and practices of the Church even at the cost of schism or of prioritising the visible unity of the Church even at the expense of the safeguarding of the purity and rightness of doctrines and practices. Setting purity first intimates here, roughly speaking, the non-negotiable precedence of the concretely displayed holiness marked by upholding the true and unadulterated Christian confession of faith and the transformed way of Christian life stemming from the believers' union with Christ in the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, ranking the visible unity of the Church first implies the belief in the imperative of unity,⁵⁹¹ the conviction of the theological necessity of the openness to other voices,⁵⁹² the admission of the limitedness of one's own theological horizon, the hope for reaching at a better understanding of one another's perspective through honest interaction, and the rejection of dogmatic absolutism or theological isolationism.⁵⁹³

The evangelical and conservative theologians in the context of the 10th Assembly of the WCC unanimously threw criticism at the WCC for its prioritisation of the visible unity over the purity, as exemplified in their institutional approach to unity and relativising of the

ministry of Jesus on earth without the de-politicisation of the gospel and institutionalising of the Church (Jang-hyun Ryu, "Minjung Theology and Ecclesiology" ["민중신학과 교회론"], in *Ecclesiology*, ed. by Korean Society of Systematic Theology (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 2009), 438-455.). Moreover, Ryu's exposition of Jae-joon Kim's theology introduces his severe criticism of the orthodox theology in Korea, and the tone seems almost condemning in saying that it 'is an insult to God by a theological system that suppresses human beings by the human-made dead doctrines and creeds' ('정통주의 신학은 인간이 만든 죽은 교리와 신조로 인간을 억압하는 신학체계로 하나님에 대한 모독이다') (Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church* [종말론적 신학과 교회] (Osan: Hanshin University Press, 2009), 235-236.).

⁵⁹⁰ The continuation of the pattern is evident (Cf. Timothy S. Lee, *Born Again: Evangelicalism in Korea* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2010), 24-26, 115-119.).

⁵⁹¹ Hyung-gi Lee clarifies that ecclesiology is the task of the Faith and Order Commission and the central aim is to search for the true nature and calling of the Church along with the pursuit of the visible unity of the Church on the basis of Jesus' prayer in Jn. 17:21. At the same time, he rejects the idea that the WCC seeks to become a super church (Hyung-gi Lee, '[Expecting from the WCC Assembly at Busan 2] Misunderstandings and Understanding of the WCC, and Expectation' (trans. by the author) ['WCC 부산총회에 바란다 2] WCC 에 대한 오해와 이해, 그리고 기대', *Christian Thought* (trans. by the author) [기독교 사상] 2 (2013), 194-196, 199, 201, 203.).

⁵⁹² Byung-joon Chung states, concerning the frequently-criticised case of Hyun-jung Chung at Canberra Assembly in 1991 and the Baar Statement in 1990 that the WCC has the duty to listen to different voices as an organisation, but, at the same time, cannot take a pluralistic standpoint due to the existence of both conservative and progressive voices in its midst (Byung-joon Chung, 'Major Controversial Issues of the Opposition to the Tenth Assembly of the WCC at Busan and an Alternative' (trans. by the author) ['WCC 제 10 차 부산총회 반대의 주요 쟁점과 대안'], *Christian Thought* [기독교 사상] 9 (2013), 44-45.).

⁵⁹³ Cf. Gyoong-jin Kim, '[Expecting from the WCC Assembly at Busan] Historical Significance of the WCC Movement and Expectation for the Assembly at Busan in 2013' (trans. by the author) ['WCC 부산총회에 바란다] WCC 운동의 역사적 의의와 2013 년 부산총회에 대한 기대', *Christian Thought* [기독교 사상] 1 (2013), 206-207.

centrality of confessional unity.⁵⁹⁴ The common suspicion is that it is actually the uniformity of the Church that is promulgated and encouraged by the WCC, and it has much more intensified since the participation of individuals of the Roman Catholic Church and the Greek Orthodox Church in the movement.⁵⁹⁵ A related criticism is that, in the WCC's pursuit of this particular unity, they detect an increasing tendency towards religious syncretism and even pluralism.⁵⁹⁶ In other words, the conservatives did not really see the WCC-led ecumenical movement as a genuinely Christian ecumenism formed and informed by the Scripture, primarily for its suspected orientation to a certain form of doctrinal pluralism.⁵⁹⁷ Thus, they were not convinced that their participation would redirect the WCC's theological proclivity, which some even regarded as irretrievable, seeing that the historical instances of the involvement of evangelical theologians in its assemblies and activities, such as John Stott and Peter Beyerhaus, did not feature any sign of having influence on its overarching theological characters.⁵⁹⁸

The concern for purity was expressed via various media, e.g. articles, books, and common statements.⁵⁹⁹ However, all the voices have commonality in terms of the rationales for their

⁵⁹⁴ Yong-gyu Park, "Historical Consideration of the WCC Ecumenical Movement" (trans. by the author) ["WCC 에큐메니칼 운동의 역사적 고찰"], in *Is WCC A Real Church Union Movement?* (trans. by the author) [*WCC, 참된 교회 연합 운동인가?*] (Suwon: Yungeumsa, 2012), 100-101. Park admits that religious pluralism is not the only voice he can hear from the WCC, but still critiques that the explicit theological positions of not a few documents by the WCC as well as the overall theological direction that the WCC takes showcase the tendency towards religious syncretism or pluralism (Yong-gyu Park, "Historical Consideration of the WCC Ecumenical Movement", 104.). Young-yup Cho's criticism is also directed towards the serious lack of concern for confessional unity and the hierarchical understanding of the vertical and horizontal unity of the Church in the WCC's works (Young-yup Cho, *What the W.C.C. is Really Like?* [*W.C.C. 의 정체*] (Seoul: CLC, 2013), 236, 247-248.).

⁵⁹⁵ Yong-gyu Park, "Historical Consideration of the WCC Ecumenical Movement" (trans. by the author) ["WCC 에큐메니칼 운동의 역사적 고찰"], in *Is WCC A Real Church Union Movement?* (trans. by the author) [*WCC, 참된 교회 연합 운동인가?*] (Suwon: Yungeumsa, 2012), 101. See also, Byung-ho Moon, "A Critique of the Christology of the WCC Centered on the Doctrine of Hypostatic Union" ["WCC 기독교론 비판: 위격적 연합 교리를 중심으로"], in *What's the Difference between WCC and Us?* [*WCC 는 우리와 무엇이 다른가?*] (Seoul: The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Korea Publishing, 2011), 158-159.

⁵⁹⁶ The adjective "particular" is employed here because the Korean evangelical and conservative theologians assert that they do not reject biblical ecumenism, but do not accept the WCC's way of approach to ecumenism. Ahn's perspective that the WCC seeks the visible unity while undermining "*Unio cum Christo*" is widely shared by them (In-sub Ahn, "A Critique of the Ecclesiology of the WCC" ["WCC 의 교회론 비판"], in *What's the Difference between WCC and Us?* [*WCC 는 우리와 무엇이 다른가?*] (Seoul: The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Korea Publishing, 2011), 175.). Park points out that, due to the want of the exclusivity of the gospel of the cross, resurrection, and glorification of Jesus Christ without which the true unity of the Church is of impossibility according to John 17, the WCC's one-sided emphasis on mere "unity" that can even stretch to all humanity implicates the absence of Christ Himself in their meeting at Busan (Jung-sig Park, "The Biblical Oneness of the Church: From the Perspective of John 17" ["성경적인 교회의 일치: 요한복음 17 장의 하나됨을 중심으로"], in *What's the Difference between WCC and Us?* [*WCC 는 우리와 무엇이 다른가?*] (Seoul: The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Korea Publishing, 2011), 197-200.).

⁵⁹⁷ Byung-ho Moon, "A Critique of the Christology of the WCC", 160.

⁵⁹⁸ Park also expressed his doubt in relation to how much actually Tonghap, which he deems comparatively evangelical, can influence theological direction of the WCC (Yong-gyu Park, "Historical Consideration of the WCC Ecumenical Movement" (trans. by the author) "WCC 에큐메니칼 운동의 역사적 고찰", 104-105.). Sung-bong Kim insists that the evangelicals who support the WCC's ecumenical movement are likely to be more harmful to the Church because of the negative influence they would carry with themselves, e.g. the weakening of the sensitivity to the matter of truth and spiritual discernment (Sung-bong Kim, "The Fatal Influence of the WCC-like Union Movement on the Pastoral Ministry" (trans. by the author) ["WCC 적 연합운동이 목회에 미치는 치명적인 영향"], in *Is WCC A Real Church Union Movement?* (trans. by the author) [*WCC, 참된 교회 연합 운동인가?*] (Suwon: Yungeumsa, 2012), 68-70.).

⁵⁹⁹ It seems quite noticeable by looking at the common statement declared by the professors of the Chong-shin University and Theological Seminary affiliated with the Hap-dong denomination. Ha provides the English translation of the statement: '① The WCC denies the fact that the Bible is the word of God. ② The WCC denies the orthodox doctrines of the Trinity, Christology, soteriology and ecclesiology; regardless of the wrongness and

rejection of the WCC, e.g. the authority of the Scripture, soteriology, christology, missiology and ecclesiology.⁶⁰⁰ And yet, it seems that the authority of the Scripture is certainly of central significance for all the other issues, forasmuch as the principle of the Reformation "*Sola Scriptura*" forms and informs the contents and nature of Christian doctrines. It was strongly doubted that the WCC accepts the infallibility, whole inspiration, and absolute authority of the Scripture as the standard for the belief and conduct of the Church – despite the Council's stated respect for it. Seung-goo Lee argues accordingly that the WCC basically allows all kinds of interpretations of the Scripture.⁶⁰¹ The problem of biblical interpretation seems intimately interlinked with the Korean evangelical and conservative Christians' adherence to the Reformed Confessions of Faith, particularly the Westminster Confession of Faith.⁶⁰² For them, whether to get involved in the WCC or not is a matter of preserving or losing their Christian identity, which cannot be simply tossed away for the sake of the visible unity. They were not convinced that their rejection of the WCC necessarily alludes to separatism, but they rather deemed that their reaction is a justifiable response for nothing other than the significance of the pursuit of the true Church unity is at stake.⁶⁰³ This perspective is also brought forth by Moon who suggests that the genuine ecumenism is that which is grounded on the idea that the unity of the Church is pursued in accordance with and for the truth.⁶⁰⁴

Given the contextual information and contemporary ecclesiological discourses therein, the core matter in question appears to be the theological polarisation concerning the nature of the true unity of the Church and the related concern for the preservation of the purity of the Church. It exhibits a distinct manner of discourse with a forceful appeal to normativity. In ecclesiology, the unity of the Church in its form and nature is the main area where the conflicting views clash with each other. Besides, it needs be mentioned that, in this tense relation, the holiness of the Church is of definite significance particularly in terms of the way in which it is related to the unity.

differences of doctrines, it seeks only the visible unity of churches. ③ The WCC goes astray from the monotheism revealed in the Bible, pursuing religious plurality and claiming that other religions also offer salvation. ④ The WCC does not admit Jesus Christ as the only mediator of redemption. ⑤ The WCC confuses the Holy Spirit and spiritual appearances of other religions. ⑥ The WCC distorts the essence of the church and insists on visible fellowship. ⑦ The WCC impairs the balance between gospel evangelism and social responsibility. ⑧ The WCC member churches of Korea are a minority in Korea, but act as if they are representatives of the Korean Church (Jaegwon Ha, 'Unity and Catholicity', 183.). Ha's explanation seems legitimate that, despite the presumable denial of these accusations by the advocates for the WCC, it might well be how the Korean conservative Christians see and interpret the WCC's line of thinking (Jaegwon Ha, 'Unity and Catholicity', 184.).

⁶⁰⁰ Concerning missiology, the WCC's "*Missio Dei*" has become the frequent target of criticism for the common assessment that it one-sidedly emphasises the social dimension of salvation at the cost of the loss of the biblical perspective on mission (In-sub Ahn, "A Critique of the Ecclesiology of the WCC" ["WCC의 교회론 비판"], in *What's the Difference between WCC and Us?* [WCC는 우리와 무엇이 다른가?], 171-172.). Young-yup Cho and Chang-sik Park oppose the weakening of the imperative of evangelism for personal salvation through the lopsided weight on humanisation, which encourages the people of other faiths to become better religious practitioners in the pursuit of their own religions without having to repent and believe in Jesus Christ as the only Saviour for their sins (Chang-shick Park, "A Critique on the Formation and History of the WCC" ["WCC의 형성과 역사에 대한 비판"], in *What's the Difference between WCC and Us?* [WCC는 우리와 무엇이 다른가?] (Seoul: The General Assembly of Presbyterian Church in Korea, 2011), 70-72. Young-yup Cho, *What the W.C.C. is Really Like?* [W.C.C.의 정체], 274-275.).

⁶⁰¹ Seung-goo Lee, "The Busan Assembly as an Extension of the WCC Theology" (trans. by the author) ["WCC 신학의 연장선상에 있는 부산 총회"], in *Is WCC A Real Church Union Movement?* (trans. by the author) [WCC, 참된 교회 연합 운동인가] (Suwon: Yungeumsa, 2012), 17.

⁶⁰² To look at the brief history of adoption of the Westminster Standards in the major Presbyterian denominations, only aside from Ki-jang, in South Korea, see Jaegwon Ha, 'Unity and Catholicity', 151-152.

⁶⁰³ Seung-goo Lee, "The Busan Assembly as an Extension of the WCC Theology", 44-45.

⁶⁰⁴ Byung-ho Moon, 'Uniting' of the Church and 'Unity' of the Doctrine, [교회의 '하나됨'과 교리의 '하나임'], 29.

4.2. Analysis on Key Ecclesiological Texts on the Unity and Holiness of the Church

The aim of theological investigation into the ecclesiological voices from Korea in the dissertation marks the intention of going further than the historical description of the Korean ecclesial context, thereby delivering a theological analysis of commonly endorsed views on the Church. Even though there are several theologians that have spoken of the Church, it would be simply impossible to have every single theologian's ecclesiology heard here. Hence, three theologians are selected for discussion whose ecclesiological works seemingly have the most relevance to the central subject of this dissertation. First, Young-yup Cho is one of the selected theologians for his lifelong interest in ecclesiology with particular interest in the World Council of Churches as a conservative theologian. Second, Jang-hyun Ryu, a professor at Han-shin University affiliated with Ki-jang denomination, is chosen for his unique ecclesiological criticisms on the traditional doctrine-based belief system in the Korean context. Lastly, Hong-seok Choi is chosen for the reason that, even though some might regard him as a typical conservative thinker in light of his official denominational association (Hap-dong), the way in which Choi approached ecclesiology ostensibly distinguishes him from a typical conservative Reformed ecclesiology. Choi, as a matter of fact, contests both progressivist and traditionalist ecclesiological frameworks. He attempts to achieve this not by searching for a common ground between the two opposed ideas, but by staying faithful to the principles of the Reformed theology as well as taking seriously the context in ecclesiological discussions.

4.2.1. Young-yup Cho's Ecclesiology

Young-yup Cho is a renowned apologist of the conservative Reformed theology in Korea with roots in the American fundamentalist tradition. He has studied at Chong-shin Theological Seminary, which is affiliated with the Hap-dong denomination, and continued his study at Faith Theological Seminary in Philadelphia for a Doctor of Ministry degree and received the Doctor of Philosophy degree at Grace Theological Seminary. He has been working with the International Council of Christian Churches and The Independent Board of Presbyterian Foreign Missions. He has written his PhD dissertation on the topic of the World Council of Churches, *A Critique of the World Council of Churches*, in 1982 and has critiqued the WCC thereafter through his work on ecclesiology (2012) and the WCC itself (2013). His criticism, which has also been directed at new theological voices in the second-half of the twentieth century, such as liberation theology in the global context and Minjung Theology in Korea and non-fundamentalistic evangelicalism, has strongly reflected his educational and confessional background as a conservative-Reformed and fundamentalist theologian.⁶⁰⁵ He has been an influential theologian who consistently voiced an outspoken opposition to the ecumenical movement of the WCC. He suggested a public debate with the proponents of the WCC before the 10th Assembly at Busan in 2013, even though it did not take place in the end.

Cho's ecclesiology, accordingly, suggests the principle of religious purity of biblical separation together with the core concept of the invisible Church in "*Unio cum Christo*" as central motif of his discourse: the visible Church is expected to mirror the attributes of the invisible Church.⁶⁰⁶ It signifies the essential and primary position of the universal Church in relation to the visible Church that exists in the form of local churches.⁶⁰⁷ He expresses that 'the universal Church is composed of the true believers in all eras that are regenerated by the

⁶⁰⁵ Young-yup Cho, *Ecclesiology* [교회론] (Seoul: CLC, 2012), 8.

⁶⁰⁶ Young-yup Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 43.

⁶⁰⁷ Cho concurs with the congregational view of the local Church—*congregatio fidelium* (Young-yup Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 50, 172.).

Spirit of God (the Holy Spirit) and baptised in the same Holy Spirit'.⁶⁰⁸ The universal Church is truly comprehensive, including the elect in the past, present, and future that are redeemed through the blood of Christ and united with Him—"Unio cum Christo".⁶⁰⁹ It is the spiritual assembly that is also characterised by its invisibility, since "Unio" is not visible, but only manifested through the local church.⁶¹⁰ Moreover, "Unio" features the Church as a spiritual organism, which is symbolically portrayed as the body of Christ.⁶¹¹ Cho employs the concept of *corpus permixtum* to outline the nature of the visible Church in distinction from the invisible Church. The visible Church exists locally as an organism and institution in a congregational form and has the mixture of those who truly belong to Christ and those who do not.⁶¹²

In Cho's account, the unity, holiness, and apostolicity of the Church themselves are construed primarily as the attributes of the invisible Church that are to be materialised in the visible Church. The unity of the Church signifies the oneness of the Church in all areas and all generations, embracing the scope of catholicity as well. This unity is that which has Jesus Christ as its Head, and it is grounded on the inner and spiritual as well as confessional unity.⁶¹³ This is why the visible unity must be the legitimate expression of the invisible unity through 'the same confession, the same participation in the sacraments, and the same pious life' ('동일한 신앙고백과 동일한 성례의 참여와 경건한 생활'). Any pursuit of visible unity without these characteristics does not exteriorise the biblical unity.⁶¹⁴ The holiness of

⁶⁰⁸ '우주적 교회는 하나님의 영(성령)으로 중생되고, 동일한 성령으로 세례를 받은 모든 시대 참신자들로 구성된다 (1 Cor 12:12 is cited. Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 171.)'.

⁶⁰⁹ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 171.

⁶¹⁰ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 173. The similar strain of thinking is observable in Byung-ho Moon's ecclesiology who, based on his interpretation of Calvin's ecclesiology, professes that "Unio cum Christo" is the basis for the unity of the Church, which he finds in the invisible Church that—in contrast to the visible Church that 'still has to achieve His will through mission and evangelism' ('여전히 전도와 선교를 통하여 그 작정을 이루어 가야 한다')—God predestined according to His will before the creation (Moon, 'Uniting' of the Church and 'Unity' of the Doctrine, [교회와 '하나됨'과 교리의 '하나임'], 111, 180.). He understands that, for Calvin, 'the visible Church on earth presupposes and is oriented towards the invisible Church' ('지상의 가시적 교회는 비가시적 교회를 전제하며 또한 그것을 지향한다'). The invisible Church for Moon is the reality that, in its essence, characterises the true attributes of the visible Church. He regards the essence of the Church to be the "body" that consists of the Head and the members—*societas* (Moon, 'Uniting' of the Church and 'Unity' of the Doctrines, 180-181), and the doctrinal aspect of unity should not be neglected since doctrines are 'the confessional statement that the visible Church on earth proclaims in reception of the biblical truth' ('교리는 가시적인 지상교회가 성경의 진리를 받아들여 선포한 고백적 진술이다') (Moon, 'Uniting' of the Church and 'Unity' of the Doctrines, 182). This understanding coincides with his view that *notae ecclesiae* of *ecclesia visibilis* must be seen 'together with *nota fidelium* that stems from the essence of the invisible Church' ('비가시적 교회의 본질에서 파생되는 성도의 표지(*nota fidelium*)와 함께 논의되어야 한다') (Moon, 'Uniting' of the Church and 'Unity' of the Doctrines, 182-183.). For this reason, it is nonsensical to pursue the unity of the Church without attention to the confession of the saints. Consequently, for Moon, the discussion on the visible unity of the Church should be of a doctrinal nature in accordance with the essence of the invisible Church, and, here, "Unio cum Christo" is the ground for the essence of the Church (Moon, 'Uniting' of the Church and 'Unity' of the Doctrines, 183-184). His perspective that the Church unity must revolve round the unity in truth and purity needs to be observed through the lens of his emphasis on the invisible Church and *Unio* (Cf. Moon, 'Uniting' of the Church and 'Unity' of the Doctrines, 188-189.). He does not believe it to be separatist to profess the truth when the Church directs itself towards the untruth (Moon, 'Uniting' of the Church and 'Unity' of the Doctrines, 193.).

⁶¹¹ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 174.

⁶¹² Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 50-52. Concerning the body of Christ, Cho explains that the symbolic portrayal of the Church as the body identifies the Church as 'a mystical reality' that cannot be fully expressed via the literal manner of description (Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 185.). The headship of Christ connotes his reign, power and authority over the body through His Word, the Holy Spirit, ministers and governing body (Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 185-187.). The scope of His reign, however, is not limited to His body only, but also places entire spiritual beings under His feet and governs all creation (*παντα*) (Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 187-188.).

⁶¹³ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 48.

⁶¹⁴ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 48-49.

the Church is accounted for with the outlook on the believers in Christ, which is compatible with the concept of *congregatio fidelium*. Holiness is embodied by justification, sanctification, consecration, and dedication. Cho sees justification and sanctification as holiness in an objective and subjective sense where the latter expresses consecration and dedication to God in the reality of the process of sanctification towards the entire holiness according to His image.⁶¹⁵ As regards the apostolicity of the Church, Cho argues that it suggests the succession of apostolic doctrines.⁶¹⁶

On this basis, Cho discusses the marks of the Church that determine true churches. What attracts attention in Cho's argument is—aside from the three marks from the Reformed tradition, which are 'the true proclamation of the Word', 'the true administration of the sacraments', and the 'faithful exercise of discipline'—his inclusion of two marks in the last days: "militant position against apostasy and unbelief" and "true worship".⁶¹⁷ The former refers to the imperative for the churches to fight the battle against the perversion of the true faith to which belong, as Cho reckons, the ecumenical movement of liberal Christians, Neo-Pentecostalism, and new evangelicals' tolerant inclusivism.⁶¹⁸ This sort of battle is not an addition to the biblical teaching, since the Old and New Testament urge the people of God to reject false doctrines and idol worship.⁶¹⁹ The close link between the true doctrines and the true worship is observed particularly in Cho's reason for the denunciation of the new evangelicals. Cho judges that the very inclusivistic and compromising attitude of the new evangelicals towards the World Council of Churches and Neo-Pentecostalism has resulted in the 'mixed theological fruits' ['혼합된 신학적 산물들'] from different traditions. It has also left their churches vulnerable—especially via their openness to the WCC—to the infection of corrupted doctrines [부패된 교리] of liberalism and humanism into seminaries, denominations, and congregations.⁶²⁰ Cho seems to be in agreement with Hyung-ryong Park's assessment that the new evangelicals should be considered as "new liberalism" or "new heresy" that departed from the true faith.⁶²¹ The true knowledge of the triune God is essential for the true worship, which explains the unacceptability of the compromise and mixture of the uncompromisable doctrines of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.⁶²²

Proportionately, Cho gets across his point of 'the biblical principle of unity' on the basis of 'the biblical principle of separation'.⁶²³ First, as concerns the principle for the unity of the Church, the most crucial foundation for unity is the redemptive work of Christ, as it carries the vertical unity between Christ and believers as the redeemer and the redeemed. Any discussion of the horizontal unity, which, according to the Apostles' Creed, entails the unique horizontal and visible unity of believers in fellowship (*κοινωνία*) in profundity in depth and universality in width, cannot be judged as biblically grounded without the vertical unity. Furthermore, the true horizontal unity must be the one that fully accepts the Scripture as the Word of God that provides "the standard" for the 'faith and deeds' ('신앙과 행위') of

⁶¹⁵ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 44-45.

⁶¹⁶ As a matter of fact, while rejecting Rome's primacy of the chair of Peter, Cho does not ignore institutional apostolicity, which seems connected to apostolic succession. Nonetheless, he dismisses that the institutional apostolicity suffices without the succession of apostolic doctrines (Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 46-48.).

⁶¹⁷ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 59-61.

⁶¹⁸ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 49, 55-56.

⁶¹⁹ Cho refers to Ex. 20:3-4, Col. 2:8, 18 and Rev. 22:8, 9 (Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 232.).

⁶²⁰ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 484, 658, 665.

⁶²¹ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 513.

⁶²² The true knowledge of God seems to involve the right confession of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit as well as the knowledge of God as the Spirit—from Jn. 4:24—that denotes His nature of immateriality, invisibility, personalness, infinity and holiness (Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 246-250.).

⁶²³ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 653, 667.

believers, and it must be accompanied by the same confession of faith, especially on the essential articles of faith such as the inerrant authority of the Scripture, Jesus' virgin birth, redemptive death on the cross, physical resurrection, ascension and return, the reality of the heaven and the hell, the justification only through faith, and so forth.⁶²⁴ It does not mean that Cho simply casts aside any sort of relationship with other denominations, since he maintains that, even if there are disagreements on minor issues in theology, there must be agreement on the 'essential/fundamental doctrines of historical Christianity' ('역사적 기독교의 근본적 교리들') for the faithful communication with the others.⁶²⁵ The real motifs of unity are witnessing Christ and the Word of God, preserving the purity of the truth of the gospel and the Church, and combatting thoughts and ideologies that feature unbelief, apostasy and an anti-Christian nature.⁶²⁶

Therefore, the biblical principle of separation receives its sheer significance in Cho's ecclesiological thinking. He believes that God's command for the Church is its separation from the world, sinful deeds, false beliefs, compromising attitudes, and unbelieving liberalism.⁶²⁷ The separation comes before the unity, and, in this sense, separatism is not to be disallowed, but fully endorsed.⁶²⁸ Those who are degenerate with unbelief and apostasy must be picked out for admonition, and they should not be allowed to influence the believers. Cho underlines the medical term "gangrene" that Paul employs in order to point out the serious infectiousness that false teachings have on the faith of believers.⁶²⁹ For this reason, the right practice of discipline is fully encouraged for the purpose of keeping 'the purity of the gospel and the purity of the Church' ('복음의 순수성과 교회의 순수성').⁶³⁰

Cho's standpoint on the unity of the Church revolves around his stern emphasis on preserving the purity and holiness of the Church, which touch upon the doctrinal, spiritual, and moral purity and holiness. Moral purity and holiness here seem to have mostly to do with the conventional perception of the pious living shared by the evangelical Christians in Korea, even granting that the specific way in which the justifiability of certain prohibition and allowance is articulated might differ among theologians, pastors and believers. Cho explains that the Church is called to fight the sins that are hatched from the sinful (fleshly) nature of humanity such as idolatry, lustfulness, enmity, partisanism and all expressions of sexual immorality.⁶³¹ As a matter of fact, more specific standards of Christian living in moral purity can be comprehended fairly clearly by referring to the description of the moral qualifications of pastors, considering that, while the principle applied to every believer does not waver, certain pastoral generosity or tolerance is normally administered to the members of congregations in the interpersonal context.⁶³² Cho's viewpoint that the pastors must be the person of good example to the congregations signifies that, especially when it comes to moral standards, the teaching and guidance that the congregations receive are based on the standard

⁶²⁴ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 667-669.

⁶²⁵ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 670.

⁶²⁶ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 670-671.

⁶²⁷ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 664-665.

⁶²⁸ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 663.

⁶²⁹ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 658. It seems that 2 Tim 2:16-17 is referred to here in relation to the teaching that leads to ungodliness. By this reference, Cho appears to focus here on the doctrinal aspect and thereby point especially to the teachings of the World Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches in Korea. He employs the Scripture, the creeds and the Reformed confessions as the authority and standard by which one's teaching is to be judged and critiqued. He uses the expressions such as "liberalism" and "humanism" to refer to the line of teachings that do not fully accept the fundamentals of the creedal faith (Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 509, 655-658, 665.).

⁶³⁰ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 655-658.

⁶³¹ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 53-54.

⁶³² Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 129.

upheld and maintained by the pastors.⁶³³ By the word "example", Cho does not mean that the pastors must be absolutely blameless without a hint of sin, but, as a justified sinner, they must be actively striving for living in accordance with God's law.⁶³⁴ This standard applies to the inner and outer dimension of Christian life with soberness, self-discipline, self-control and vigilance. It entails, in submission to the Word of God, the qualities and characters of restraining the desires of the flesh, being a faithful husband to 'only one wife' ['한 아내'] followed by a life with sexual purity,⁶³⁵ being generous in hospitality, having a forgiving heart, knowing the orthodox doctrines according to the Scripture, having an orderly mind, life and attitude, not loving money, and abstaining from drinking and smoking.⁶³⁶ Although it is not exhaustive in scope, this list points at the good standard of Christian living pursued by the vast majority of Christians in Korea. What needs be also underlined here is that the moral purity is grounded on the doctrinal purity, which has to do with the right understanding and worship of God.⁶³⁷

In this vein, Cho detects the intensification of holiness in the New Testament by pointing at the usage of the word "ἅγιος"—'holy of holies'—for the description of the redeemed. The Church as the congregation of believers is where God dwells through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.⁶³⁸ His adherence to "*Unio*" needs be understood against this backdrop, as it refers to the invisible Church in Christ that will be evidently manifested in the eschaton. The invisible Church entails the meaningfulness of the universality of the Church in a true sense, compared to the *corpus permixtum* of the visible Church observed in a local congregational form. The calling for the visible Church is to be the reflection of the invisible Church, and it generates the meaning of the genuine pursuit of unity that pits itself against any concept for unity embedded with compromise and room for a relativistic turn.

Seeing this, it seems unjustifiable to judge his ecclesiological stance as simply separatist for the separation's sake. It is because he does not reject the unity itself outright, but, instead, offers the account of 'the biblical principle of unity' in accordance with his ecclesiological framework.⁶³⁹ His description of the principle renders weight on the authenticity of the Christian unity, which means that the Christian unity can only be dealt with in a way that strongly prioritises the vertical unity in *koinonia* between Christ and believers, only from which the horizontal unity can receive its meaningfulness. The vertical unity, for Cho, is not a

⁶³³ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 128, 133.

⁶³⁴ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 133.

⁶³⁵ Cho regards the definition of adultery as having 'voluntary sexual intercourse' ('자원적 성적 관계') between man and woman that are not in marital bond (Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 120.). Following Paul's teaching in 1 Tim 3:2 and 5:9, Cho asserts that no one who has more than one wife or has a promiscuous lifestyle should take up a pastoral role (Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 119.). Homosexual relationships are denounced outright, not to mention the ordination of homosexuals (Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 123-125.).

⁶³⁶ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 117-150. Cho seems to highlight Paul's command in Rom 6:13: "Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness" (ESV). Cho relates alcohol consumption to the increase in proclivity towards immoral deeds and sins, e.g. violent behaviours and self-indulgence, whereas smoking is considered as damaging the body where the Holy Spirit dwells. Both smoking and alcohol consumption are a waste of money and a pursuit of fleshly desires. Cho presents as a better interpretation that οἶνος in Jn. 2:1-11 and Matt. 11:19 (οἶνοπότης) is the indication of non-acoholic grape juice that Jesus consumed, and, suggests that 'unfermented grape juice' ('발효되지 않은 포도즙') was used for the Lord's Supper—του γενήματος της ἀμπέλου (Matt. 26:29, Mk. 14:25 and Lk. 22:18) (Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 139-150.). The primary basis for Cho seems to be Rom. 6:13, and he is of the opinion that alcohol consumption and smoking go directly against living a dedicated life to God only.

⁶³⁷ Cho makes this point clear in Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 59. This is why Cho's description of the Church's fight in the present involves both the struggle against the flesh and its desires and the rejection of doctrines that differ from the orthodox Christian faith (Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 53-55.).

⁶³⁸ Cho appeals to 1 Cor. 3:17 (Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 230.).

⁶³⁹ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 653, 667.

matter to treat lightly, but calls for thoroughgoing exploration on the essential aspects of Christian faith: confession, sacraments and pious living. This foundational grasp on unity is interlinked with the motive of unity, which consists of witnessing Christ and the Word, keeping the truth of the gospel and the Church, and fighting against corrupt, wayward, and anti-Christian thoughts. The Church should be protected from all kinds of sinful and evil influences that infect believers like "gangrene" in order for it to stay faithful to the Lord and proclaim boldly the truth of the gospel to the world.

4.2.2. Jang-hyun Ryu's Ecclesiology

Jang-hyun Ryu is a graduate of Han-shin University. This institution's roots go back to Cho-sun Seminary established in 1940 after the closure of Pyeong-yang Seminary in 1938 by Japanese order. It was at the opposite side of the theological spectrum to the conservative Reformed denominations such as Hap-dong and Ko-shin.⁶⁴⁰ After receiving his Master's degree at Han-shin University, which is affiliated with the Ki-jang denomination, Ryu graduated from Humboldt Universität zu Berlin for his Doctoral degree in 1997, for which he researched Leonhard Ragaz's view on the Kingdom of God and religious socialism.⁶⁴¹ Ryu's ecclesiological thinking finds its home in the tradition of the Ki-jang denomination. He seems to have taken substantial inspiration from Ragaz whom he regards highly as a person with prophetic vision.⁶⁴² Ryu continues to teach systematic theology at Han-shin University to the present day.

As for his ecclesiology, Ryu sees the Church as an event originating from and thereby entrusted with Jesus' "the Kingdom of God movement". For Ryu, the nature and calling of the Church should be sought after by looking into the ministry of Jesus Christ.⁶⁴³ What Jesus proclaimed was not himself, but the Kingdom of God,⁶⁴⁴ and the character of his ministry can only be understood by comprehending the nature of the Kingdom, which can only be grasped by the correct perception of God Himself.⁶⁴⁵ Ryu sets forth thereby the Lordship and the Fatherhood of God as a way of describing the nature of God. The former points at the reign of God over all sorts of authorities that are against Him and the world liberated through Him, whereas the latter designates the family of God where the sonship/daughtership and brotherhood of human beings are completed in His Fatherhood.⁶⁴⁶ In the same vein with this

⁶⁴⁰ Cho-sun seminary became Hankuk Theological University in 1951 where the supporters of Cho-sun seminary gathered in 1953 to establish the separate General Assembly for Ki-jang denomination. Its name was changed to Hanshin University in 1980 as a collegiate university.

⁶⁴¹ Ryoo Jang-hyun, "Reich Gottes und seine Gerechtigkeit für die Erde: Das Verständnis von Reich Gottes und Sozialismus bei Leonhard Ragaz in seiner Bedeutung für die christlich-sozialistische Bewegung in Südkorea", Diss., Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, 1997).

⁶⁴² Cf. Jang-hyun Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church* [종말론적 신학과 교회] (Osan: Hanshin University Press, 2009), 99.

⁶⁴³ Jang-hyun Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church* [포스트모던 사회와 교회] (Seoul: Preaching Academy, 2006), 11.

⁶⁴⁴ Citing Jn. 4:34 and 6:38, Ryu states that the Church is not supposed to preach Jesus Christ, but the Kingdom of God. He thereby rejects Christocentric theology. He relates Christocentrism in theology to the loss of the eschatological outlook from the early period (approximately since late in the second century and manifestly from the Constantinian period) (Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 58-59.). Accordingly, his definition of the gospel is not the gospel of Jesus Christ, but the gospel of God and this viewpoint is interrelated to his own conception of the Kingdom of God that has to do with God Himself (Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 73-75.). Ryu regards the Christological debates in the early period as futile as they were not directed to the Kingdom of God (Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 82.).

⁶⁴⁵ Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 11.

⁶⁴⁶ Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 12. He interprets the parable of the prodigal son in terms of the restoration of the relationship between the father and the son instead of the repentance of a sinner and the forgiveness of God (Jang-hyun Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 200.).

designation of the Kingdom, Ryu considers the ministry of Jesus Christ to be a "religious-societal revolution". The religious revolution is concentrated in criticism against religious formalism, following the idea that Jesus demanded 'the practice of the infinite voluntary love that overcomes the limitation of the law' ('율법의 한계를 넘어서는 무한한 자발적 사랑의 실천을 요구했다').⁶⁴⁷ The societal revolution directs itself to the establishment of a new society that overthrows social divisions,⁶⁴⁸ which connote all kinds of division, including that between believers and non-believers generated by the 'possession of truth' ('진리의 소유') as well as the righteous and the unrighteous through the 'possession of morality' ('도덕의 소유').⁶⁴⁹ Ryu believes that Jesus intended to establish a new society that resonates with the vision of the Kingdom, and that he bestowed the gifts of the Holy Spirit on the Church for this purpose.⁶⁵⁰ Ryu argues:

'The absolute aim of the religious-societal revolution is the manifestation of the Kingdom of God, and its relative aim is the formation of a world faith community that corresponds to the Kingdom of God'.⁶⁵¹

Accordingly, the direction that Christian mission should take is neither mere individual salvation nor social reform, both of which the Church should see as relative hope (상대적 희망).⁶⁵² Rather, the scope of the aim should extend to liberation at a cosmic level that includes individuals, societies, diseases, fates, nature, religious doctrines and theology, and, finally, death.⁶⁵³ As the disciples and the Church were entrusted with the ministry of Jesus Christ, they were the eschatological community that awaited and worked for the coming of the Kingdom.⁶⁵⁴ The Kingdom is the key to the right interpretation of the Scripture and the nature of the gospel, as it places nothing other than the Kingdom itself at the centre of every other relative authority, including the Scripture—'God is bigger than the Scripture' ['성서보다 크신 하나님'].⁶⁵⁵ Ryu's scepticism over the mechanic inspiration theory is accompanied by his emphasis on the "directness" of the experience of God through which the Scripture would be interpreted more in a pneumatological sense.⁶⁵⁶ Only by doing so, one can emancipate from the literalistic reductionism that confines the work of the Holy Spirit within

⁶⁴⁷ Matt. 19:16-26 that narrates Jesus' answer to the rich man's question is cited (Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 12-13.). Ryu pinpoints the directness of relationship between God and humanity together with his stress on every believer's experience of the Holy Spirit as well as on the reception of His gifts. He contends that the religious revolution is to overcome the systematising and theologising of the truth, which he regards as destroying the revelation of the living God (Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 193.).

⁶⁴⁸ Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 13.

⁶⁴⁹ The parables of two sons (Matt. 21:28-31) and a Pharisee and a tax collector (Lk. 18:9-14) are cited for the possession of truth and morality respectively (Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 13.). In this vein, Ryu's view is that eschatology has much more to do with the present life than the future (Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 199.).

⁶⁵⁰ Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 13, 17.

⁶⁵¹ '종교적-사회적 혁명의 절대적 목표는 하나님 나라의 실현이며, 상대적 목표는 하나님 나라에 상응한 세계 가족 공동체 형성이다 (Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 13.)'. Ryu's concept "the ministry of Jesus Christ" should be interpreted along this line of thinking (Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 13-14.).

⁶⁵² Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 169.

⁶⁵³ Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 169. The absolute hope is, then, unity between God, humanity, and nature (Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 170.). Ryu disagrees with the *Missio Dei* concept as well since he sees the danger of its being metamorphosed into a political ideology via its emphasis on the presence of the Kingdom and the structural evil in the society oppressing humanity (Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 169.).

⁶⁵⁴ Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 14.

⁶⁵⁵ Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 121-122.

⁶⁵⁶ Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 122.

the rule of dead letters, philosophical presuppositions and speculations.⁶⁵⁷ He maintains that 'any fact, principle or condition cannot replace God' ('어떤 사실, 원리, 조건도 하나님을 대신할 수 없다'), since such substitution amounts to idolatry.⁶⁵⁸ This cosmic level of the scope of the Kingdom is the reason why Ryu criticises the Church in the early period and in the Reformation for the loss of this eschatological outlook. He deems that this deficit caused the early Church to reject Montanus' movement and the Reformation theologians to reduce the ministry of Jesus Christ into the individual salvation. Even the modern churches have not overcome the reductionistic understanding from the Reformation era.⁶⁵⁹ The eschatological hope of the full manifestation of the Kingdom exists in the tension of "already and not yet", which Ryu understands in terms of the process of development—in a sense of back-and-forth struggle—from the point of fulfilment through Jesus Christ (Erfüllung) to the completion (Vollendung) in Jesus' παρουσία, which underscores the "presence" of the Kingdom.⁶⁶⁰

The equal distribution of the gifts of the Spirit to the members of communities without any kind of discrimination—according to class, gender and so forth—is one of the primary points Ryu relatedly holds on to, especially when it comes to "religious democracy" [종교적 민주주의], which is a revolution on the level of religious communities and is a premise for "political democracy" [정치적 민주주의].⁶⁶¹ This motif of equality leads to an argument for the abolition of theology and dogmas as well as of authoritative hieratic classes, as the former prohibits the direct fellowship between God and humanity by being a mediator, whereas the latter divides rank between clerics and laypeople in terms of religious hierarchy, thereby suffocating 'humanity's "sonship/daughtership and brotherhood" in the Fatherhood of God' [하나님의 아버지됨 안에서 인간의 자녀됨과 형제됨]. The freedom of the children of God can be observed only when such power structures of possession—the possession of truth and religious authority—are eradicated.⁶⁶² In this line of thought, a 'deified absolute monarchy' [신격화된 절대국가]—as a governmental form—is also subject to rebuttal, because it compromises and disturbs the freedom and the directness of the relationship between God and His people by means of force and authority.⁶⁶³ Ryu points out that Ragaz understands Mt. 20:20-28 to be Jesus' imperative for 'the abolition of nations and the formation of new communities' [국가의 폐지와 새로운 공동체의 형성]. The concept of nation and all enforcements therefrom are dissolved when the reign of God [하나님의 통치] is realised.⁶⁶⁴ The reign of God liberates humanity from all kinds of oppression and violence. In place of governmental centralisation, it points towards a 'socialistic, democratic and unionistic community' [사회주의적, 민주주의적, 조합주의적 공동체] that coincides with the nature of the community under God's reign, which can only stem from love and

⁶⁵⁷ Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 118, 122.

⁶⁵⁸ Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 141.

⁶⁵⁹ Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 14-15.

⁶⁶⁰ Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 42, 264-265. Ryu uses words "Erscheinung", "Gegenwart", and "Ankunft" to clarify the meaning of παρουσία, which is not necessarily "return", but more of "approach to the present". His reason is that "return" presupposes the "absence", whereas παρουσία of Christ existed, exists, and will be disclosed completely (Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 267.). His view of the process of development of the Kingdom does not necessarily imply an evolutionary process, but more of a progress through struggles and fights—with the antichrist, this world, and Satan (Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 270.). He takes "the Day" as the day of the completion of salvation, and not the judgment day, and he is agnostic on the question of universal salvation (Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 273.).

⁶⁶¹ Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 179.

⁶⁶² Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 170-175.

⁶⁶³ Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 175-177.

⁶⁶⁴ Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 176.

freedom.⁶⁶⁵ This community suits a federalist system, which is established through 'the revolution of the community occurring within three interrelated centre circles' ['서로 밀접하게 결합되어 있는 세 가지 중심원 안에서 일어나는 공동체의 혁명']. The three centre circles consist of political-religious democracy [정치적-종교적 민주주의], Christ's socialism [그리스도의 사회주의] and Christ's communism [그리스도의 공산주의].⁶⁶⁶

This community formed on the basis of a political-religious democracy is founded on the fundamental idea of 'the infinite value of individuals and their freedom' ['인간의 무한한 가치와 자유'] in their sonship/daughtership in the Fatherhood of God. It corresponds to Christ's socialism.⁶⁶⁷ The chief principle of Christ's socialism is the social form [사회적 형태] of brotherhood and social solidarity [사회적 연대성]. For this reason, social injustice and structural evils are judged to be antagonistic to God's order, and this understanding stimulates social revolution.⁶⁶⁸ Christ's communism is the final form of federalism in which the social solidarity is completed. This communism distinguishes itself from secular communism in the sense that it can only be realised through the Spirit of Christ [그리스도의 영] and the right understanding of God the Father.⁶⁶⁹ Here, what stands out is 'the revocation of absolute possession' [절대소유의 폐지] and the completeness of social solidarity in community.⁶⁷⁰ Ryu maintains that Christ's communism is not a mere ideal, but it was already manifested in the early Christian community ['초기 교회 공동체'] through the coming of the Spirit. It was not a forced system, but emerged with the voluntary spirit of the members of the community where the brotherhood and solidarity were expressed in the "Brudermahl" and the distinction between individuals according to the possession of wealth faded away.⁶⁷¹ This direction of social revolution is possible according to the logical sequence [논리적 순서] from the religious to social transformation, which attests to the rejection of any forceful or violent methodology of revolution while adopting the methodology of sacrifice as materialised in the substitutionary death of Christ on the cross.⁶⁷²

The notion of the religious-political revolution in the Fatherhood of God and the Spirit of Christ seems to find its explicit example in Ryu's introduction to Minjung Theology. In Minjung Theology, the rejection of the institutionality of the Church and its oppressiveness and indifference to the suffering of the people turns towards the view of the Church as an event community generated by the Spirit in a restored eschatological expectation.⁶⁷³ The people, then, become the subjects that partner with God in the Holy Spirit and the leaders of communities in equality, thereby annulling all sorts of existent discrimination along with hierarchical ecclesiastical structures.⁶⁷⁴ Instead of being mere recipients of the interpretation of Scripture by religious authorities, the people are now the interpreters of the Scripture and willingly participate in the work of the Spirit wherever His liberating work for the people occurs. Where the people's suffering transpires, they sacrificially carry their grief and unrequited sorrow, namely Han [한 (恨)], thereby overcoming the vicious circle of vengeance

⁶⁶⁵ Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 177-178.

⁶⁶⁶ Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 178.

⁶⁶⁷ Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 179-180.

⁶⁶⁸ Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 180-181.

⁶⁶⁹ Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 182.

⁶⁷⁰ Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 182-183.

⁶⁷¹ Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 183-184.

⁶⁷² Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 163-165, 180-181.

⁶⁷³ Jang-hyun Ryu, "Minjung Theology and Ecclesiology", 438-440, 450-452.

⁶⁷⁴ Jang-hyun Ryu, "Minjung Theology and Ecclesiology", 445-447.

and violence.⁶⁷⁵ The suffering of the people is not depoliticised but is carried through, such as in the life and murder of Jesus. His political death by the religious authorities for His mission for the people and preaching of the Kingdom of God calls for a new social order ['새로운 사회질서']—for the people.⁶⁷⁶

Ryu's main idea also becomes visible when he speaks about labour in relation to the Kingdom of God. He explains that humans, through labour, 'participate in the sovereignty of Christ, perfect creation and become co-workers of the Kingdom of God that renews the heaven and the earth ['그리스도의 주권에 참여하며, 창조를 완성하고, 하늘과 땅을 갱신하는 하나님 나라의 협력자가 된다']'.⁶⁷⁷ Also, he believes that the labour movement against unemployment in particular points at 'the heart of the gospel' [복음의 핵심] and is the fight for 'God and His Kingdom' ['하나님과 그의 나라'] as this reality is 'the warning voice of God' ['하나님의 경고의 음성']. He considers unemployment as blasphemy against God. And the theological meaning of unemployment is that it hinders self-realisation, causes social death, destroys the sonship/daughtership of humans in God's Fatherhood, the brotherhood of humanity and the relationship between humans and nature, and cuts off the cooperation between God and humans'.⁶⁷⁸ This idea is grounded in his absolute rejection of a capitalistic society that he regards to be dominated by the spirit of Mammon, atheism, and worldly desires.⁶⁷⁹ The abolishment of capitalism and the establishment of an alternated society in accordance with the presence of the Kingdom resonate with this perspective.⁶⁸⁰

In this line of thought, Ryu underscores the desert fathers, monastery movements, pietist movements, John Wesley, revival movements in America and so forth, because these movements erupted when Church and society became corrupt.⁶⁸¹ Ryu highlights the eschatological-pneumatological emphasis in parallel with a Christocentric theology as well as the impetus for religious-societal renewal when the experience of the Holy Spirit is combined with concrete life.⁶⁸² Ryu argues that 'the foundation and power of the Christian faith should depend on the supernatural source and be expressed in reality ('기독교적 신앙의 토대와 힘은 초자연적 원천에 의존해야 하며 현실적으로 표현되어야 한다')'.⁶⁸³ The experience of the Holy Spirit implies something deeply personal, and secularisation is an inevitable result if the life of Christians and the Church is without this experience.⁶⁸⁴

⁶⁷⁵ Jang-hyun Ryu, "Minjung Theology and Ecclesiology", 440-444.

⁶⁷⁶ Jang-hyun Ryu, "Minjung Theology and Ecclesiology", 448-449, 452-454.

⁶⁷⁷ Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 37.

⁶⁷⁸ Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 40-41.

⁶⁷⁹ Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 29-30.

⁶⁸⁰ Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 42-43.

⁶⁸¹ Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 60.

⁶⁸² Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 60, 63.

⁶⁸³ Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 84-85.

⁶⁸⁴ Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 87-89. Ryu argues for the vital importance of the experience for Christian faith by quoting Acts 2 (the outpouring of the Spirit on believers on the Day of Pentecost) and 9:1-7 (Paul's encounter with the resurrected Jesus Christ) (Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 87.). He extends the concept of the priesthood of all believers into the idea that laypeople should take up the central role of mission and ministry in accordance with the church being an "eschatological gift-community" ('종말론적 은사 공동체'), which connotes the equality of all believers, the invigoration of the ministry of laypeople, the rejection of the "monopoly" of ministry (especially that of preaching and teaching), and the abolition of theology and institutional structures that suffocate the work of the Holy Spirit either through theologising/dogmatising or the vertical power structures centred round the church's leadership (Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 100-101, 163, 167, 170-172, 178-180.). Ryu discerns the functional differences according to the gifts, but underscores the togetherness of ministry of all believers (Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 180.).

Ryu's ecclesiological perspective on the four attributes of the Church needs be comprehended on the basis of his particular understanding of the ministry of Jesus Christ that was entrusted to the Church: 'the proclamation of the Kingdom of God' ('하나님 나라의 선포').⁶⁸⁵ It is argued that the unity of the Church is not to be understood as being grounded in the person of Christ, but in his ministry. The unity of ministry, therefore, should be the locus for the unity of the Church, not the unity of faith or sacraments.⁶⁸⁶ The catholicity of the Church is not related to the catholicity of the gospel, but to the unchangeability of the Church that comes from the ministry of Jesus Christ. The apostolicity of the Church is not about the apostolic succession, but rather indicates the Church as being the representative of God for the ministry of Jesus Christ. Ryu also does not agree that the holiness of the Church means the gathering of the people that are distinguished from others due to their way of belief. It is, instead, the holiness of the ministry of the Kingdom, which implicates the transformation of the world. He acknowledges that the true Church should harmoniously display the four attributes as reinterpreted as such.⁶⁸⁷ The churches that do not practice this ministry of Jesus Christ must be abolished as they have given up on their calling and have become a mere 'religious interest group' ('종교적 이익 집단').⁶⁸⁸

4.2.3. Hong-seok Choi's Ecclesiology

Hong-seok Choi is a renowned professor in systematic theology who worked at Chong-shin Theological Seminary, which is affiliated with Hap-dong denomination, from 1984 to 2016. He was respected for his humble and pious life. His theological stance has been in line with the conservative Reformed theology in Korea and has been deeply influenced by Dutch Reformed theology, especially that of Herman Bavinck.⁶⁸⁹ His theological education can be traced back to the influence of Young-bae Cha who was his Father in law and theological mentor and the Theologische Hogeschool van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland in Kampen. Cha studied at the Theologische Hogeschool Kampen (Broederweg) under L. Doekes, and later on taught at Chong-shin Theological Seminary.⁶⁹⁰ For Choi's education, Klaas Runia supervised his Doctoraalscriptie on homilectics, *Verkondiging en Heilige Geest*.⁶⁹¹ Lee explains that ecclesiology has been one of Choi's main interests for his understanding of the complementary relationship between the Church and theology. Other than that, Choi's theological interests appear to revolve around mainly classical dogmatic subjects.⁶⁹²

Hong-seok Choi's approach to ecclesiology seems to reflect his theological reasoning exhibited in his Doctoraalscriptie on preaching. Choi objects to the objectivistic as well as subjectivistic approach to preaching; the former would undermine the directedness of the

⁶⁸⁵ Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 15.

⁶⁸⁶ Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 16. This approach entails the denial of the significance of doctrinal differences among different traditions (Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 166.)

⁶⁸⁷ Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 16.

⁶⁸⁸ Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 17.

⁶⁸⁹ Sangung Lee, 'The Life and the Main Theological Concerns of Professor Hong Suk Choi', *Presbyterian Theological Quarterly* 82, 3 (2015), 88-89, 98, 106, 113, 133.

⁶⁹⁰ Cf. Sangung Lee, 'The Life and the Main Theological Concerns of Professor Hong Suk Choi', 96-100.

⁶⁹¹ H. S. Choi, 'Verkondiging en de Heilige Geest' (Doctoraalscriptie, Kampen Theologische Hogeschool, 1984). See also, Sangung Lee, 'The Life and the Main Theological Concerns of Professor Hong Suk Choi', 96-108. Lee explains the reason why Choi could not finish his PhD dissertation. He was called by the seminary for the lack of faculty members after the schism between Hap-dong and Hap-shin in 1980, and he came back to support the school (Sangung Lee, 'The Life and the Main Theological Concerns of Professor Hong Suk Choi', 99, 108.).

⁶⁹² Sangung Lee, 'The Life and the Main Theological Concerns of Professor Hong Suk Choi', 122-132.

revelation of God to His people in the particularity of their situation, and the latter would impoverish 'the message of the Scripture' ('de boodschap van de Schrift').⁶⁹³ Together with his emphasis on the inseparability between the Word and the Spirit, the Scripture and the Spirit, conversion and the Spirit, and confession and the Spirit⁶⁹⁴—he sees that a "theonomous" interplay between the text and the context must be implemented in the concrete and particular backdrop of the congregation but the text is still prioritized with normativity.⁶⁹⁵ The absolute significance of the Holy Spirit in the context of preaching suggests that the preaching itself with all kinds of effort for preparation will be fruitless (vruchteloos) if the work of the Holy Spirit ('de werking van de Heilige Geest') is not present.⁶⁹⁶ Choi critiques two types of preaching in the Korean context. The first one is the method of preaching held by those who only trust in 'the immediate action of the Holy Spirit' ('de onmiddellijke inwerking van de Heilige Geest') and do not value the preparation through the study of the Word. The second one is the approach in which so much is trust in the preparation that the room for the Spirit's immediate working is overshadowed. Choi opts for the affirmation of both the preparation of the Word and the immediate working of the Spirit in the framework of theonomous reciprocity.⁶⁹⁷ It seems that Choi's discussion on preaching unveils his dogmatic viewpoint that the continuity of the Church is expressed not only in terms of the inseparability between the Word and the Spirit, but also in the context-sensitive manner of the Spirit's working in particular ecclesial situations.

Speaking further of his ecclesiology, Choi professes the perspective that the characteristic of the co-existence of unchangeability and adaptability is the distinct feature of ecclesiological discourse, as 'ecclesiology has a similar character as the preaching of Christianity that draws on the hermeneutical interplay between text and context' ('교회론은 텍스트와 컨텍스트 사이에 해석학적 순환을 도출시키는 기독교의 설교와 유사한 성격을 지닌다').⁶⁹⁸ He does not side with either a traditionalist or progressivist ecclesiology, since the former would only allow an ecclesiology that is from 'a certain time and culture in the past' ('과거 특정한 시대와 특정한 문화') and loses historicity itself in its discourse, whereas the latter, by way of uncritical adaptation to the contextual conditions, loses grip of the conditionality of the truth that reflects the light of the Scripture.⁶⁹⁹ The essence and form of the Church, in view of its unchangeability and adaptability, should not be considered in isolation from each other, and yet, mere merging of the two should not be allowed since the due distinction between

⁶⁹³ H. S. Choi, 'Verkondiging en de Heilige Geest', 75-76.

⁶⁹⁴ On the Scripture and the Spirit, Choi sets forth as follows: 'De Bijbel en de openbaring vallen niet samen en staan evenmin los van elkaar. De Schrift behoort ten volle tot de openbaring. De Schrift is door de Heilige Geest geïnspireerd (2 Tim. 3:16). Deze aktiviteit van de Geest is niet iets van het verleden alleen, maar er is een blijvende relatie tussen de Schrift en de Geest. De Schrift staat nooit op zichzelf (H. S. Choi, 'Verkondiging en de Heilige Geest', 42.)'. Another instance is Choi's explication on conversion: 'De Heilige Geest speelt een onmisbare rol in roeping en wedergeboorte, omdat de mens geheel verdorven is (Rom. 3:9-18, 7:18, 8:5-8, 9:16)...Vanwege Adams overtreding is de mens dood in zonde (Gen. 3:19, Rom. 5:12, 6:23) en heeft daarom aan een uitwendige verkondiging van het Woord voor zijn zaligheid niet genoeg. Er moet een andere inwendige genade van de Heilige Geest bij komen, waardoor de mens herboren wordt en tot geloof komt (Choi, 'Verkondiging en de Heilige Geest', 43.)'.

⁶⁹⁵ 'De bediening van het Woord van God is in haar diepste wezen een pneumatologische zaak. Het basisprobleem, dat in de homiletiek in verband met de verkondiging aan de orde komt, is de vraag naar de verhouding tussen het goddelijke en het menselijke in het preekgebeuren. Een christologische benadering dreigt de menselijke kant van de zaak onder druk te zetten. Maar de pneumatologische inzet maakt het mogelijk aan het anthropologische aspect recht te doen. In het begrip van de "theonome recipociteit" worden alle menselijke inspanningen in het verkondigingsgebeuren niet uitgesloten, maar wordt daaraan juist een legitieme plaats gegeven (Choi, 'Verkondiging en de Heilige Geest', 83. See also, Choi, 'Verkondiging en de Heilige Geest', 54-55.)'

⁶⁹⁶ Choi, 'Verkondiging en de Heilige Geest', 75.

⁶⁹⁷ Choi, 'Verkondiging en de Heilige Geest', 58-59.

⁶⁹⁸ Hong-seok Choi, *Ecclesiology* (Seoul: Solomon Publishing, 1998), 26.

⁶⁹⁹ Hong-seok Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 25-26.

them must be maintained in order to sustain the outlook on 'the lasting unchangeable elements' ('항구적인 불변적 요소').⁷⁰⁰

Keeping this in mind, together with the outlook on the relationship between the Kingdom of God and the Church, Choi sets forth that the essential nature of the Church should be construed as "the people of God" and "the body of Christ", as each is defined by salvation-historical and christological associations. The former can be understood in terms of 'the election and the covenant' ('선택과 언약'), whereas "the body of Christ" (σῶμα Χριστοῦ) denotes 'the existential aspect' ('실존적 양상') of the Church.⁷⁰¹ These two notions are not separable, and the latter is to be seen as 'the christological interpretation' ('기독교론적 해석') of the former.⁷⁰² In other words, "the people of God" explains the foundational meaning of the Church, and "the body of Christ" narrows down the identification of "the people of God" as the Messianic people in the distinct unity that is christologically determined.⁷⁰³ The deployment of the phrase "the body of Christ" does not mean the exclusive usage of this concept only. Choi keeps a trinitarian outlook, including the concept "the temple of the Holy Spirit", while finding the concentrated meaning of "the people of God" in "the body of Christ".⁷⁰⁴ The indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Church and His provision of good things such as the gifts and the power for the Church clearly are present.⁷⁰⁵ Choi rejects any attempt to identify the Church with the Kingdom as well as to make an absolute distinction between them. He puts forward that, in their organic relatedness, 'the Kingdom precedes the Church' ('바실레이아는 에클레시아에 선행한다') and 'the Kingdom is more comprehensive than the Church' ('바실레이아는 에클레시아보다 더 포괄적이다').⁷⁰⁶ This relationship explains

⁷⁰⁰ Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 26-27. Choi does not find evidence to support that the New Testament backs only one form of the congregation. He rather insists that the specificity of the form should be perceived together with the peculiarity of the contextual situation in which the Church finds itself. This standpoint appears quite distinct since he rejects any kind of contextualism that waters down the Christ-centred nature of the Church in its identity and mission, and, at the same time, endorses the idea that the congregational form is not a matter of givenness once for all for all times and in all places, but can have contextually explicable peculiarities. He pays attention to whether the congregation really is Christ-centred in its identity and mission (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 109.).

⁷⁰¹ Cor. 1:18 and Eph. 1:22-23 are cited here (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 44-45.).

⁷⁰² Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 46-47.

⁷⁰³ Choi refers to Rom 9:25, 2 Cor. 6:16, 18, Titus 2:14, Heb. 8:10, 13:12 and 1 Pet. 2:9-10 (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 60.). He rebuffs the idea that the Church was not intended by Jesus, but maintains the covenantal perspective that characterises Jesus' intention to be gathering His own eschatological people, composed of His disciples. He finds a close connection between the Messianic confession of faith "Jesus is Christ" and the visible manifestation of the Church on earth (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 42.). The covenantal continuity and discontinuity between the people of the Old Testament and those in the New Testament revolve round this Messianic confession of faith (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 42-43.). 'The root of the New Testament Church is already found in the Old Testament revelations' ('신약적인 교회의 뿌리는 이미 구약 계시 속에서 발견된다는 사실') (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 61.). He rejects any superficial or simplistic conclusion concerning the reality of the Church, as he deems that it resounds the spiritual profundity through the grace of God for His people (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 61.).

⁷⁰⁴ Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 44-47.

⁷⁰⁵ 1 Cor. 12:13, 3:16-17 and 6:19 and Eph. 2:21-22 are cited for the indication of the presence of the Holy Spirit, which, seeing the content of the cited verses, seems to include His presence in an individual believer as well, whereas Gal. 5:22-23 and Rom. 8:9-11 are pointed at to designate the good things bestowed on the Church by the Spirit (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 46.). At the same time, by alluding to Rev. 22:18-19, Choi advocates cessationist point of view as to the continuous gifts of the Holy Spirit. The main motive behind this is to uphold the absolute authority of the Scripture only to which nothing can be added and from which nothing can be detracted (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 32.). He locates 1 Cor. 14 before the closure of the special revelation (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 32.). Young-yup Cho is also of the same opinion as to the continuation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, especially the prophecy, healing, miracles and speaking in tongues (Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 234.).

⁷⁰⁶ Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 43-44. 'The Kingdom of God is the grand ministry of salvation of God achieved and completed in Christ, whereas the Church is the people that are elected and called by God, and enjoy the blessings of the Kingdom...Also, the Church is the community of those who hope for the salvation of the Kingdom of God' ('하나님의 나라는 그리스도 안에서 성취되고 완성되는 하나님의 대 구속사역이라면, 교회는 하나님에

the place of the latter against the backdrop of the presence of the former—"already"—and its coming completion—"not yet"—in Christ.⁷⁰⁷

This christological nature of the Church in light of the trinitarian grounding puts emphasis on the primary significance of the vertical union between Christ as the Head and believers as the members of the body through His grace and their obedience.⁷⁰⁸ Both the grace of Christ and the obedience of believers are necessary to the communion between them. This communion, subsequently, must lead to the horizontal fellowship of believers together with the outward-bound directedness, as "the people of God" claims its place with the missional motive.⁷⁰⁹ Christocentricity in this structure of relationship transcends any strand of ecclesial isolationism or syncretism. It entails the unique inclusivity as well as common identity in obedience to Christ. Choi thinks that the 'purity and unity of the Church' ('교회의 순수성과 통일성') will be compromised if either the vertical identity or the horizontal inclusivity has exclusive voice.⁷¹⁰

On this basis, he defines the Church as 'the gathering of believers' ('믿는 자들의 모임') as a way of transcending polarisation between ecclesiological perfectionism and ecclesiological nominalism. Ecclesiological perfectionism is exposed as the danger of lifting up the true Church from the ground and relying solely on a certain absolutist and abstract ecclesiological idea. On the other hand, ecclesiological nominalism sticks to the external elements such as baptism and membership and, by doing so, loses grip of the fact that the elements of mere externality cannot be the guarantee of one's faith and election.⁷¹¹ It is only when the faith of believers takes central position that the ecclesiological abstraction as well as the misunderstanding of the nature of the Church can be overcome. Here, Choi is only addressing the true faith that leads to salvation, and he adds that this faith is not merely internal, but is displayed through 'the confession of faith and deeds' ('신앙고백과 행위').⁷¹² It signifies the reality of a certain ambiguity in which the Church finds itself, as the mere externality of one's baptism and membership cannot guarantee the real presence of his/her faith.⁷¹³

For Choi, the Church has a complex multi-dimensionality in that its supra-spatial and supra-temporal reality can only be grasped and experienced in multiple aspects in the limitedness of space and time on earth.⁷¹⁴ In relation to this, Choi expresses that the Church has two dimensions of *ecclesia militans* and *triumphans*. Believers are not exempt from the struggle with 'sins, the world, and themselves' ('죄와 세상과 자신') in this world, and this struggle is only possible because the fact that 'the power comes from the promise of God and above'

의해 택하심과 부르심을 받고, 하나님 나라의 복을 누리신 백성들이라고 할 수 있다...또한 교회는 하나님 나라의 구원을 대망하는 자들의 공동체이다' (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 43.)

⁷⁰⁷ Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 43. The presence of the Kingdom in its reign and power in Christ clearly exists in the Church, but not exclusively, as Choi explains (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 43.). The reign of Christ is manifested in the world, despite the existence of evil (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 117.).

⁷⁰⁸ Choi uses a trinitarian outlook when he articulates the indivisibility of Christ and the Holy Spirit—he follows the Heidelberg Catechism here—as well as the election of believers by the Father. He rejects any exclusive christocentrism or pneumacentrism for ecclesiological definitions, as the former has the danger of identifying the Church with Christ in the incarnational view of the Church, while the latter has the possibility of overlooking the significance of institutional facet of the Church (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 106-107.).

⁷⁰⁹ Choi points out the lack of the missional perspective in the Heidelberg Catechism, and claims that the concept "the people of God" should have its place in relation to "the body of Christ", since the former proclaims the Church's calling as His people (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 108.).

⁷¹⁰ Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 99-101.

⁷¹¹ Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 90.

⁷¹² Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 91.

⁷¹³ Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 92.

⁷¹⁴ Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 93-94.

(‘능력이 하나님의 약속으로부터 그리고 위로부터 주어졌기 때문’).⁷¹⁵ They should, in all this, retain eyesight on the present in the light of the gospel and the eternity.⁷¹⁶ This view of the twofold dimension of the Church coincides with the dimensional outlook on the invisible and visible reality of the Church in rejection of the existence of two Churches. The invisible dimension of the Church is interconnected with the emphasis of the Reformed theology on the relationship between the faith of believers and the Church in a true sense. For humans, it is impossible to judge whether one's faith is true or not is and it is not even their calling, but it is only Christ that knows who truly belongs to Him. Here, the concept "*Unio cum Christo*" is of significance for its essential invisibility to human eyes. However, Choi, at the same time, adds that this invisible "*Unio*" is visibly manifested in a visible form together with institutionality. The exteriorised visible form cannot claim to have finality regarding the issue of the belonging of individuals to Christ.⁷¹⁷

The outlook on the faith and anti-deterministic approach as observed so far in Choi's ecclesiology determines the way in which he approaches the four attributes of the Church.⁷¹⁸ As far as the unity of the Church is concerned, he points at its christological and pneumatological signification as *unio cum Christo* and *communio sanctorum*. They explain the verticality and horizontality of the unity of the Church.⁷¹⁹ This unity is of a spiritual nature, in a sense that it refers to the unity in baptism, faith, hope, and love. However, at the same time, it is also a visible reality. Choi upholds the idea that the visible unity is not something to be desired in complete demonstration in this world. Its manifestation always has imperfections. He argues that, in relation to true believers, what unites them has much more to say than what divides them. In this sense, he also explains that purity comes before solidarity and holiness has priority over unity.⁷²⁰ As for holiness, Choi understands that, following the Reformers' conception of the Church as *communio sanctorum*, the holiness of the Church has objective and subjective aspects. The former can be identified in the justification of believers by faith, whereas the latter alludes to the inner transformation of believers by the work of the Holy Spirit, so that they would live a sanctified life according to God's commandments.⁷²¹ When it comes to catholicity, its invisible dimension that 'involves all true believers' ('모든 참된 신자들을 포함') has primary position, while the visible dimension takes the secondary position since it receives only reflective connotation and

⁷¹⁵ Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 94.

⁷¹⁶ Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 95.

⁷¹⁷ Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 96-97. The visible Church has two dimensions: the organicity of *communio sanctorum* and the form of institution. The latter's true meaning is in its functionality of keeping the order, and can only be found in its subjection to and directedness to the former (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 98-99.).

⁷¹⁸ In rejection of Rome's lack of recognition of the testing significance of the marks of the Church, Choi hangs on to the principle of *Sola Scriptura* as well as *Ecclesia reformanda semper reformata*. Turning down the inward-looking search for criteria determining the true Church, he underscores the external authority of the Scripture over the Church for testing and criticism (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 120-121.). He goes along with Bavinck and Berkouwer in viewing the Word as the mark that involves the other marks: the pure administration of the sacraments and discipline (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 129-130.). The sacraments can only draw their contents and meaning from the Word. Choi also believes that the Word speaks of the institutional structure ordained by God that authorises only ministers to administer the sacraments (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 131-132.). He also stresses the practice of discipline for the sake of the purity of the Church—'the purity of doctrines' ('교리의 순수성') and 'the holiness of the sacraments' ('성례의 거룩') (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 132-133.). This explication suggests that the sacraments and discipline are dependent on the Word in every dimension of their practices (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 131.). Meanwhile, Choi integrates the indefectibility and infallibility of the Church in view of the promise of Christ given to the Church for keeping it from falling into the state of absolute and final error as well as for always having His people in the world notwithstanding all kinds of difficulties that the Church is bound to go through in its life (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 127.).

⁷¹⁹ Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 121-122.

⁷²⁰ Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 122-123.

⁷²¹ Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 123.

significance.⁷²² Regarding apostolicity, Choi asserts that it should be comprehended in prioritisation of *successio doctrinae* over '*successio locorum et personarum*' where the latter is to be subjected to the former. He also takes note of the missional perspective given to apostolicity in the modern era, and agrees that the Church is 'sent to the world for the proclamation of the gospel' ('복음 전파를 위해 세상에 보냄을 받은') today.⁷²³

In view of the main line of his argument, Choi attempts to transcend the extreme positions of traditionalist and progressivist ecclesiologies.⁷²⁴ It is evinced by his grip on unchangeability and adaptability as the principle of ecclesiological investigation, in a way that it would overcome ecclesiological abstraction or relativism. This motif agrees with his expression that 'ecclesiology should not exist for the sake of the existence of the ecclesiological system itself' ('교회론이 교회론적 체계 자체의 존립을 위해 존재해서는 안된다'), but it should acquire applicability and relevance to the actual life of the Church.⁷²⁵ Here, the firm foundational principle of *Sola Scriptura* denotes the continuous presence of the motif of testing. Also, it seems that, by placing the faith of believers at the centre of his ecclesiological configuration, Choi tries to imbue in his ecclesiology a strong sense of concreteness instead of abstract perfectionism. At the same time, his emphasis on the christological nature of the Church within the trinitarian outlook adds theological authenticity and continuity to the concreteness. The concreteness and authenticity are the main character of his discourse not only on the nature of the Church, but also on its ministry and mission.

Furthermore, Choi rejects ecclesiological determinism and relativism by putting forth the multidimensional complexity of the reality of the Church, e.g. *ecclesia militans* and *ecclesia triumphans* as well as the imperfection of Christian unity on earth, an aspect that needs more attention for its distinct voice. This opposition coincides with his characterisation of ecclesiology as a hermeneutical interplay between text and context, which denounces abstract conservative ecclesiology or contextualist relativism. The contextuality of the ecclesiological hermeneutic is not neglected, but exists with the textuality without overruling it. It basically means that Choi approaches ecclesiology as a confessional Reformed theologian in the light of the reality of the Church instead of pure theoretical rightness, admitting the imperfection of Christian unity on earth as well as the complexity of the multidimensionality of the Church.

4.2.4. Assessment of Cho's, Ryu's, and Choi's Ecclesiology

Seeing the observation so far, it is quite clear that divergence is present among the three theologians in terms of theological principles, motif, premises, weights/emphases, contents and structures in ecclesiology. Their discourses on the unity and holiness of the Church are moulded by those elements, and the manner in which unity and holiness are portrayed has close connection with each of their ecclesiological frameworks that are divergently formulated. At the same time, however, when it comes to the fundamental question of giving priority to purity—in terms of faith, doctrines, and ethics—or unity, a particular polarisation is visible even among the three thinkers: Cho and Choi in dissimilar manners held on to the priority of purity whereas Ryu, by setting forth ministry in the Holy Spirit with an eschatological outlook as a determining factor, refuses to uphold such a principle of purity in relation to the unity of the Church. The real divergence exists in ecclesiological formulation, premises, principles, emphases, contents, and structures among the works of the three theologians. It indicates the illegitimacy of the reductionistic grouping of the conservative and progressive circle and the necessity of the implementation of critical assessment on each

⁷²² Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 124-125.

⁷²³ Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 126-127.

⁷²⁴ Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 172.

⁷²⁵ Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 173.

ecclesiological thesis for analysis and critique in order to find a re-formative way forward in the following discussion.

To begin, the fact that Young-yup Cho puts weight on the priority of the vertical unity of the Church clearly manifests a quite significant religious motive, namely having Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church. A distinct aspect of Cho's approach is that this motive coincides with the principle of the pure confession of faith and the pious Christian living as attested in the Scripture and the historical Church. It plays a significant role also in the idea of "biblical separation" that Cho sets forth as the imperative of the Church, since the areas where the Church is called to implement separation have to do with the religious and ethical dimension as shown in the expressions as "believers and unbelievers", "light and darkness", "righteousness and unrighteousness", "Christ and Antichrist" and "God and idols".⁷²⁶ The biblical separation whose criteria consist of the clear and fundamental belief of the Christian faith in accords with the Apostles' Creed as well as the acceptance of the inerrant authority of the Scripture as the Word of God addresses an important question of "who" the Triune God is and "whom" the Christians are to worship. The fact that Cho draws the line for fellowship and communication on the basis of the principle of biblical separation is interrelated to a fundamental religious motive, which cannot be compromised or watered down. Without the understanding of the religious motive, it would be quite easy to perceive Cho's ecclesiology as mere separatism. In fact, the centrality of the motive addresses a critical and real matter to the Church: the serious calling for purity (Cf. 1 Cor. 6:9-11, 17-20, 2 Cor. 6:17-7:1). The imperative of the purity of the Church is an undeniable point that cannot be overemphasised.

Nonetheless, albeit his significant contribution to the due recognition of the critical significance of the purity of the Church, Cho's separatist position backed and justified by the concept of the invisible Church calls for more critical assessment. First of all, he acknowledges the lack of the indication of the "entity" of the invisible Church in the Scripture, and yet he still continuously establishes his thesis of ecclesiological separatism on this concept. It needs to be asked if his ecclesiological ontological dualism is truly justifiable, insofar as one does not set aside the historicity and concreteness of the biblical account of the people of God in the Old Testament and the New Testament. Cho's own acknowledgement of the lack of biblical designation for the "entity" of the invisible Church and his simultaneous emphasis on the absolute authority of the Scripture would strongly intimate that his ecclesiological separatism is not directly informed by the biblical accounts.

In relation, Cho's identification of the Church as "spiritual body" or "spiritual organism" makes it difficult to articulate how the visible Church can really be called the living body of Christ in a strict sense. He only classifies the invisible Church as that which truly belongs to Christ in accordance with "*Unio cum Christo*" whereas the visible Church is an imperfect mixed body.⁷²⁷ Therefore, his usage of "spiritual body" or "spiritual organism" sounds more akin to the universal invisible Church,⁷²⁸ even though he admits that the Bible most frequently references the visible Church whenever 'church' is portrayed.⁷²⁹ This perspective brings about a serious impairment to the outlook on the biblical understanding of the Church in the history of salvation of God, which is portrayed with concrete terminologies, such as "people", "nation", "priesthood" (1 Pet. 2:5, 9), "body of Christ" (1 Cor. 12:27) and "light" (Matt. 5:14, Lk. 8:16). It is deterministic in the way it views unity and holiness of the Church by portraying these concrete aspects of the Church as invisible and unassailable. Ultimately, this perspective makes it hard to explain how Cho's account of each individual believer, who is

⁷²⁶ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 659-663.

⁷²⁷ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 50-52, 188-191.

⁷²⁸ These concepts cannot be fathomed without "*Unio*" that Cho explicates on the ground of John 15:1-5 suggests along with the term "μὲν" the spiritual, invisible, organic and inseparable unity between Christ and believers. It does not appear to depict the imperfect visible Church (Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 200-202.).

⁷²⁹ Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 51.

called to be united with others and serve the body with his/her own gifts in the Holy Spirit, fits in with the visible Church *here and now*.

Moreover, an inquiry needs to be made into the relationship between the religious motive of and the criteria for the unity of the Church in Cho's ecclesiology. Cho calls for the implementation of the three criteria for unity: the same confession, sacraments, and pious living. It has been argued that the religious motive, having Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church, stands behind and together with the selection of the three conditions. This principle for unity, which Cho terms "biblical unity", seems to be one step further than the concept "biblical separation", which is the condition for *koinonia* between the churches. Now, a question arises as to "how" the criteria for unity are to be formulated in accordance with the religious motive: the question of the scope. It is doubtful whether the religious motive truly and materially informs the contents of the criteria for unity in Cho's account, seeing that his separatist approach to the voices other than his line of thinking is aprioristically and strongly oriented to self-defence. It intimates the reversal of the order of the informing and characterising of unity, in a sense that the religious motive does not form and critically examine the criteria for unity—confession, sacraments and pious living—but the already-complete *a priori* understanding of them overrules the religious motive and functions as an absolute authority, suppressing the motive itself.⁷³⁰ In this connection, Cho's understanding and evaluation of the ecclesiology of the World Council of Churches appear to be formulated through the filter of the *a priori* normativity of his fundamentalist Reformed theology. This prism of normativity is combined in force with his additional mark of the true church – “militant position against apostasy and unbelief” – in his outright rebuttal of the ecumenical ecclesiology. In this way, his assessment of the texts of the Council lacks a due rendering of the motives and developments of the ecumenical theology and ecclesiology originated in new historical and contextual circumstances.

As for Jang-hyun Ryu's ecclesiology, it seems clear that Ryu's redefinition of the unity and holiness of the Church stems from his rejection of Christocentric and soteriocentric theology as well as the institutional dimension of the Church and its separate way of living in Christ in distinction from the world. In his peculiar emphasis on the freedom, sonship/daughtership and solidarity with humanity in the Lordship and Fatherhood of God, the unity and holiness of the ministry of the Church now exclusively inform the nature and meaning of the unity and holiness of the Church. This shift of focus revolves around the centrality of the Kingdom of God "in presence and to come" and the calling of the Church as the representative of His Lordship and Fatherhood to manifest the Kingdom in this world until the day of completion. It engenders a dynamic character to the life and mission of the Church with an eschatological outlook, which is further strengthened with his input of the Church's being the eschatological-pneumatological or eschatological-gift community for the ministry of Jesus Christ. Also, owing to the primary outlook on the ministry of Jesus Christ and the Church's being the first to be called to serve, the strand of churchism and hierarchism buttressed by an ontologically driven characterisation of the Church is successfully criticised.

By underscoring the ministry of the Church in the Holy Spirit as the central element of its essential nature, Ryu manages not only to propagate the dynamic nature of the life of the Church on earth but also to solidify the interlinkage—instead of rigid separation—between the Church and the world from the scope of the Kingdom of God. It becomes especially visible when he pinpoints the rejection of the de-politicisation of the suffering of people—and

⁷³⁰ Cho makes it clear that he follows Evangelical, Calvinist, Reformed and Conservative theology. Here, it is important to note that he rejects not only liberal, but also Neo-evangelical theology due to their leniency in dogmatic and ethical issues as well as their tendency towards cooperation and unity. He calls neo-evangelical thinking "new neutralism". It seems that the confession that Cho is referring to basically echoes the traditional Calvinist belief as manifested in the Heidelberg Catechism, the Canons of Dort, the Westminster Confession of Faith et cetera. Among all these, he highlights the Westminster Confession of Faith particularly as the one that represents the Reformed faith. He does not accept the theological need for the reinterpretation of the orthodox doctrines (Young-yup Cho, *Biblical Answers on Facing Issues in the Church and Society*, 17-22.).

the suffering of Christ—in Minjung Theology. It is accompanied by the imperative of following the way of Jesus in His solidarity with the people, His message of the Kingdom and the demand of a new society, and last but not least, His sacrificial death. This rebuttal of the strictly religious interpretation of the cross of Christ seems not only to shed light on the political dimension of the ministry of the Saviour, but also to seriously question the way in which the ecclesiastical discipline has been executed in the concrete ecclesiastical context. As for the latter, it could be either local, regional and synodal bodies or academic institutions such as seminaries that would make religious excuses while being politically motivated in the implementation of certain disciplinary measures. Additionally, Ryu's emphasis on the sacrificial way of dealing with the injustice such as unavenged grief and deep sorrow, which finds its fundamental motif in the truth of the gospel, strongly suggests a pathway to the incapacitation of perpetuating or even aggravating resentment and antagonism in the ecclesial and social context.

Another point to underscore is Ryu's pneumatological emphasis that prevents the perpetuated outlook on the concreteness of the life of the Church from falling into naturalistic rationalism, but is informed by the Holy Spirit through the gifts for ministry. It maximises the sensitivity of God's people to the guidance and leading of the Holy Spirit. The immediate response of the Church to the Spirit's working is made possible through the mobility and flexibility of communities that have shaken off the burden of ecclesiastical formal structures and procedures. The agility and context-sensitiveness of ministry is a key point, which would be able to uphold the evangelical perspective on Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit as well as the outlook on the *Creator Spiritus* in the midst of workplaces, schools, academic institutions and other sites, insofar as the centrality of the gospel is firmly maintained. The appreciation of the gifts of the Spirit would be able to stimulate a more diversified and gift-sensitive form of ministry in the contemporary context. Additionally, this pneumatological scope is met by an eschatological input, which underscores the presence of the Kingdom in Jesus' fulfilment—tasting the Kingdom on earth in the experience and the blessings of the Holy Spirit—as well as the anticipation for the Kingdom to come.

In fact, eschatological emphasis on ecclesiology is shared by other progressive theologians, e.g. Won-young Son and Joon-gwan Eun. They agree on, in general, Moltmann's historical-eschatological outlook in rejection of salvation-historical perspective and on *Missio Dei*.⁷³¹ Eun provides a more detailed theological grounding for his position. What stands out in Eun's theological outlook is the weight of the reign of God in history—while being characterised and arranged by the resurrection of Christ and the promise therefrom (Moltmann)—as "Divine Gestalt" (Hodgson) or God's context that prompts its positive interpretation despite its corruption.⁷³² This perspective is accompanied by Eun's acceptance of Moltmann's framework "Kingdom of God—History—Eschatological Church" in which the Church manages to emancipate from the ecclesiocentric outlook and has a strong sense of responsibility for history, which God intends to reconcile with Himself in Jesus Christ.⁷³³ This calling comes together with the expanded horizon that identifies the Church as a pilgrim community in the midst of history as well as involves 'the sense of common destiny and responsibility' ('공동 운명의식과 책임 의식') with the others.⁷³⁴ He believes that the introduced framework would bring a paradigm shift to the Korean churches that are increasingly becoming church-individualist, ecclesiastically authoritarian, and denominationalist by providing the insight that 'the ultimate basis of the Christian faith is God

⁷³¹ Joon-gwan Eun, *Theological Ecclesiology* [신학적 교회론] (Seoul: Handl Pub., 2013), 431-440. See also, Won-young Son, *Theopraxis Ecclesiology*, 202-204.

⁷³² Joon-gwan Eun, *Theological Ecclesiology*, 432, 458-459.

⁷³³ Eun, *Theological Ecclesiology*, 459. Here, the world is historicised through the lens of the promise of God in the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the history itself is "promissory" as it is shaped by the promise and arriving future (Eun, *Theological Ecclesiology*, 432-435.).

⁷³⁴ Eun, *Theological Ecclesiology*, 459-460.

and His reign and the Church is the witness of that reign' ('기독교 신앙의 궁극적 근거는 하나님과 그의 통치에 있으며 교회는 그 통치의 증언') as a 'historical-eschatological community' ('역사 종말론적 공동체').⁷³⁵

This line of eschatological perspective clearly has its strength in discouraging ecclesiocentric perspective by underlining the clear limitations of such outlook in the light of the Kingdom of God. Ryu's underscoring of the Holy Spirit and the significance of the immediacy of the church's response needs be acknowledged for its important ecclesiological insight. However, notwithstanding the important ecclesiological points, his idea of the Kingdom and the Church retains an abstract and speculative character due to the lack of the scope of the faith. The lack of sharp distinction between believers and non-believers as well as between the Church and the world—not to mention his rejection of dogmatic theology—locates the subject of theologising not in the confession of faith, but in the human experiences and feelings that appear freed from the testing and criticism by the standard of the doctrines of the Church and the Scripture. Because of this, his emphasis on the "presence" of the Kingdom, which needs be duly emphasised, leads to the polarised understanding between the Gospels and the Pauline Letters, not being able to comprehend the concept of "*Unio cum Christo*" and "the Body of Christ" that clearly refer to a particular relationship between Christ and believers, which is in no way perceivable without the correlation between the real and actual grace of God—with the redemptive work of Jesus Christ and through the work of the Holy Spirit—and the faith-response of believers. Especially, the lack of imperative of obedience and repentance as a faith-response to God clouds the concrete and biblical ecclesiological outlook.

This deficiency is connected to Ryu's denunciation of the Christocentric and soteriocentric view of the gospel and the Church.⁷³⁶ With Ryu's eschatological perspective emphasising the reign of God in the present, his worldview consequently sounds paradoxically abstract, speculative, and even arbitrary—combined with his subjectivistic locus of theologising in reliance on human experience.⁷³⁷ Even though Ryu's critique on dead orthodoxy or dogmatism should be addressed at the fundamental level of theologising, the religious and doxological motif of this struggle that illuminates the essential directedness of the faith of the Church, namely worshipping God with honour and glory that are due to Him, cannot be overlooked (1 Sam. 2:27-30, Jn. 5:23, Rev. 4:9-11, 5:11-12). Ryu's outright rejection of the creeds and doctrines—instead of the criticism of the misunderstanding, misuse or abuse in theological appreciations, interpretations or implementations by churches or individuals—ends up giving an undeniable impression that his ecclesiology is formulated through a speculative and abstract theology that fails to mirror the correlation between *Sola et tota Scriptura* and the faith of believers. The loss of the locus of the faith and confession leads to the unfortunate perspective that is incapable of appealing to the life of the Church "here and now", even in regards to his insight into the public dimension of the calling of the Church. This lack also explains the want of the space for mission and evangelism in his account. Ryu's perspective on the four attributes of the Church reflects this phenomenon by favouring the framework of ministry while denouncing the angle of the person of Christ for unity, the

⁷³⁵ Eun, *Theological Ecclesiology*, 448.

⁷³⁶ Ryu criticises the understanding of the gospel in terms of "justification by faith only" to be the spiritualising, personalising and individualising of the gospel, which is not about Christ himself, but rather about the Kingdom of God (Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 252-253.). Because of this separation, the depiction of the meaningful interrelationship between the former and the latter does not come about in Ryu's account.

⁷³⁷ The speculative impression appears to coincide with the downplaying of the redemptive work of Christ for sinful humanity as well as the imperative of repentance and faith that does not exempt one from, but calls him/her to live holy and obedient lives in rejection of the former way of living (Cf. 1 Pet. 1:14-25. See also, Carl R. Holladay, *A Critical Introduction to the New Testament: Interpreting the Message and Meaning of Jesus Christ* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005), 708.). Relatedly, the redemptive motive of the Christian doctrines and confessions is neglected in Ryu's discourse, as seen in his aforementioned argument against the notion of the "possession" of truth and morality itself (Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 13.).

catholicity of the gospel for catholicity, the apostolic succession for apostolicity, and the holy separation for holiness.⁷³⁸

In regards to Hong-seok Choi's ecclesiology, it has been stated that his positioning of the faith at the centre of discourse makes a distinct impact on his ecclesiological configuration that is envisioned to overcome the ecclesiological limitations of traditionalist conservatism and contextualist relativism. The authenticity and continuity as well as the concreteness and contextuality of the Church are granted their legitimate space in Choi's account by means of his approach on the basis of the hermeneutical interplay between the textuality and contextuality of the ecclesiological discourse. This peculiar dynamicity in ecclesiology in Choi's account connotes his underpinning of the christocentric and trinitarian outlook on the Church: "the people of God" indicating the covenant and election of the Church, "the body of Christ" denotative of its existential facet, and "the temple of the Holy Spirit" pointing to the indwelling and work of the Holy Spirit within the life of the Church until the eschaton.⁷³⁹ Choi retains the outlook on both the Word and the Spirit in togetherness, maintaining the normativity of the Word as well as the dynamic nature of the work of the Spirit in the concrete situatedness of the Church.⁷⁴⁰ This formulation does not indicate ecclesiological determinism, however, seeing that Choi keeps an outlook on the two dimensions of the life of the Church on earth, namely *ecclesia militans* and *triumphans*. It connotes the reality of the struggle of the Church, even though *indefectibilitas et infallibilitas ecclesiae* on the ground of the promises of Christ that they do not fade away in the midst of struggle.⁷⁴¹

Seeing all this, overall, it is quite clear that, in Choi's work, the normativity of the Word of God and the centrality of the faith in discourse make room for the hermeneutical possibility of embracing both the textuality and contextuality of ecclesiology. The motif of "theonomous interplay" in his work on preaching finds its voice in his attempt to overcome traditionalism and contextualism in ecclesiological discourses in Korea, meaning that the objective reality of the Church in relatedness to the Triune God is explained in terms of the unchangeability and adaptability of the Church "here and now" in the Word and the Spirit. The ecclesiology of Faith and Order employed the expression "legitimate diversity" to address the issue of diversity within the life of the churches. Choi's account shows the common understanding that a legitimate way of addressing the subject of diversity is important and the methods of traditionalism and contextualism are inadequate. His theological endeavour offers a distinctly Reformed view and aims to be firmly informed by the Scripture in engagement with the given context. Due to its capacity to bring the two facets together, Choi seems to provide a better ecclesiological framework than Cho and Ryu.

Still, several critical remarks need be included as well. As to the unity and holiness of the Church, Choi primarily understands them as factual attributes of the Church. The character of this factuality connotes the unchangeable and essential nature of the Church. In harmony with his positioning of the faith of believers at the centre, Choi's portrayal of unity intimates only the unity of true believers who have true faith, and, thus, purity precedes unity since the former characterises the authenticity of the latter. On the other hand, holiness denotes the

⁷³⁸ Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 16.

⁷³⁹ Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 44-46.

⁷⁴⁰ Cf. Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 137, 160-161, 172-173. Choi understands, citing Rom. 8:16 and Jn. 14:16-17, the partnership of the believers with the Holy Spirit by notifying the usage of the preposition "σύν" in the phrase "συνμαρτυρεῖ τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν" in Rom. 8:16 and "μετά", "παρά" and "ἐν" in "μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα" and "παρ' ὑμῖν μένει καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν ἐστί" in Jn. 14:16-17 (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 160-161.). The point Choi attempts to make here is the way of the work of the Holy Spirit that does not mechanise the humanity of believers or apostles, but 'uses them by regarding as a responsible subject' ('책임있는 주체로 여기시며 사용하신다') (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 162.).

⁷⁴¹ Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 94, 127. As a corroboration of *indefectibilitas ecclesiae*, Choi quotes Matt. 16:18, 28:20, Eph. 4:11-13 and 1 Tim. 3:15 whereas he does not provide the verses from the Scripture for *infallibilitas ecclesiae* (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 127.).

objective and subjective reality of sanctification of the believers through the work of the Holy Spirit.⁷⁴² Faith is summoned to give a unique linkage that provides a sense of concreteness in the midst of the objective portrayal of the attributes of the Church. However, this account is still too deterministic because it does not elaborate on the testing motif of *credo ecclesiam*, omitting the explanation concerning the manner in which the objective and subjective dimension are coexistent and yet separate. Choi's pneumatological accent in the continuity of unity and holiness does not reach into the discussion of the concrete and dynamic reality of the Church, which is the real arena where *credo ecclesiam* and pneumatological account come to visible manifestation with the force of admonition and encouragement. The way in which unity and holiness are confessed, understood, and lived out by the churches provides the very particular contextuality of ecclesiological discourse, which, as Choi elucidates, must be brought into the "theonomous interplay" with the Scripture through the Holy Spirit. This interplay fades away when the unchangeable and objective attributes of the Church are underscored, while the substantive discussion on the subjective dimension of the confession peters out.

Similarly, Choi's understanding of the unity and holiness of the Church also seems to unintentionally advocate an ecclesiological separatist view that filters out and excludes certain communities from the discourse on the subject itself, since they would not qualify to be regarded as the true churches. "The true Church" functions as the presuppositional condition—"the purity factor"—that comes before *credo ecclesiam* itself. Its filtering function does not give in even when Choi gives a disclaimer that judging whether one is a true believer is impossible for humans.⁷⁴³ It is for the reason that the unity of the Church itself can be spoken of only when the true Christians—those who have true faith—are presupposed.⁷⁴⁴ What Choi implicates by "true" here can be observed in the Word as the sole and encompassing mark of the true Church.⁷⁴⁵ Choi maintains that, if a certain church 'publicly denies the basic articles of the faith' ('신앙의 기본적인 조항들을 공개적으로 부인') or 'does not place its doctrines and living under the dominion of the Word of God' ('교리와 생활을 하나님의 말씀의 지배 아래 두지 아니할 때'), it is to be regarded 'a false church' (거짓교회).⁷⁴⁶ The point and application of the sole mark of the Word cannot be shoved aside but must be granted full implementation in ecclesiological discussion. The real issue is, however, that this entire discourse revolves around a rather scholastic distinction between the invisible-unchanging reality of the true Church in accordance with the given attributes and the visible-changeable reality of the Church that is called to concretely manifest it. Due to the distinction as well as the peculiar relatedness between the two, it is now made possible not only to exclude certain communities through the measurement of the mark of the true Church, but also to reduce the scope of ecclesiological discussion to the remaining communities and speak about the unity of the true believers, which entails stepping farther than the concrete application of the mark itself. Subsequently, the real prophetic and testing power of the Word to the Church is substituted by a scholastic affirmation of certain churches by way of filtering and exclusion. The intention of putting the faith at the centre of discourse, of course, is clear: overcoming both extremes of ecclesiological traditionalism and progressivism, but the scholastic precedence of purity heavily affects the perception of *credo ecclesiam* itself. The

⁷⁴² Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 121-123. It is based on Choi's agreement with Bavinck, over against Rome, on drawing distinction between the attributes and the marks of the Church, emphasising the testing motive of the latter on the basis of the principle of "*Sola Scriptura*". For Choi, the attributes have to do with the given nature of the Church that is supposed to be visibly manifested (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 119-122.).

⁷⁴³ Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 96.

⁷⁴⁴ Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 122.

⁷⁴⁵ Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 130.

⁷⁴⁶ Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 131.

consequence is, an ironic uplifting of the faith from the actual life of the Church, and, for the want of concreteness, Choi's discourse remains at the level of ideational abstraction.

4.3. Conclusion

In this chapter, the divergent ecclesiological configurations between the conservative and progressive Christians in South Korea with special regard to the unity and holiness of the Church have been observed. Overall, the focus has been on the churches within the Reformed tradition—particularly the Presbyterian churches in the Korean context. The historical backdrop has been succinctly provided and specific attention has been paid to the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Busan in 2013, since it conveys the most recent exemplification of the deep ecclesiological divergence between the conservative and progressive theologians from early on. Furthermore, to plunge deeper into the issue, an ecclesiological analysis has been delivered on three Korean theologians' ecclesiological works with special regard to the subject of the unity and holiness of the Church. Together with the analysis, in view of the further discussion in the next chapter, several points of criticism have also been presented. Each theologian's valuable insights have been recognised as well, since they are to be incorporated in the next chapter as it proceeds with the undertaking of composing a re-formulated ecclesiological thesis.

[Chapter 5: One and Holy – A Proposal for A Korean Reformed Ecclesiology]

In this chapter, an attempt is made to explore an approach to uphold both the unity and holiness of the Church in one picture in line with the biblical witness while avoiding the theoretical abstraction of the Church from the ground. In search of such an approach, the discussion will engage with the subjects that are relevant to the unity and holiness in the Reformed churches in Korea, as this work cannot cope with every ecclesiology related to unity and holiness in detail. The analysis in the previous chapter on the Korean context will be the background against which the current discussion will proceed. Moreover, the preceding explorations of Faith and Order's convergence document "*The Church: Towards a Common Vision*" and G. C. Berkouwer's "*De Kerk I, II*" will now be brought on the table for their ecclesiological insights together with the critical assessment of and theological interaction with these works. Finally, the gathered elements will be brought into the discussion on the unity and holiness of the Church in the Korean Reformed ecclesiology in a more context-sensitive way.

5.1. Assessment of the Important Insights from Berkouwer and *CTCV*

5.1.1. On the Unity of the Church

CTCV links the visible unity of the Church to its mission by explaining the very *telos* of the Church's existence as emanating from the *missio Dei*—the vision of God's universal plan of salvation. The teleology of the Church in accordance with the will of God for humanity and creation suggests resistance against an ecclesiological vision for the ecclesiology's sake only. Instead, it brings forth the missional nature of the Church itself and thus provides a more dynamic character of the Church. The resulting portrait is the rejection of any stagnant or static depiction. Within the dynamics of God's mission, the Church is called in the context of its provisionality in "*already*" and "*not yet*" in its being and motion. It is why the Church is called in *CTCV* 'a communion in the Triune God...whose members partake together in the life and mission of God'.⁷⁴⁷ The interrelatedness of the unity and mission of the Church is an important ecclesiological insight that provides a biblically sound outlook resistant to a static ontological ecclesiology. Approaching unity in isolation for its own sake must be rejected for the want of the serious consideration of the missiological-eschatological dimension of the Church, and this combined perspective must persist in all discourses on ecclesiology.

As for Berkouwer, he understands the unity of the Church in view of the newness of its reality in Christ through the Holy Spirit. As a consequence he does not allow any rationalisation of the division of the Church.⁷⁴⁸ The coming and presence of the Spirit as well as the sufficiency of the Headship of Jesus Christ denote the radical reality of the fellowship in the life of the Church in its relatedness to Christ—*Unio cum Christo*—that sternly denies the notion of the self-sufficiency and independency of the Church.⁷⁴⁹ In a correlative manner, it points at the reality of the common (gemeenschappelijk) faith and salvation in Jesus Christ as Berkouwer

⁷⁴⁷ *CTCV*, 23.

⁷⁴⁸ Cf. Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 38-40. As stated above, Berkouwer's critique on the concept of the invisible Church is grounded on the conviction that theoretical plausibility (of the invisible Church and the understandability of the current division of churches) does not trump the reality (one Shepherd and one flock) as revealed in the Scripture (Jn. 10:16) (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 38. See also, Cornelis van der Kooi and Gijsbert van den Brink, *Christian Dogmatics: An Introduction*, trans. by Reinder Bruinsma and James D. Bratt (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017), 577-578.).

⁷⁴⁹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 109.

cites Paul: "Is Christ divided"?⁷⁵⁰ This nature of the fellowship presupposes the "real" presence and transformative work of the Holy Spirit in believers whose faith rests upon Christ's historical work of salvation.⁷⁵¹ This notion actually seems to be of central significance for having a deeper understanding of the correlative nature of the fellowship, which is of an essentially soteriological and eschatological nature as demonstrated in one baptism in which believers participate in the corporate reality of salvation in the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ.⁷⁵² This christocentric fellowship in the Spirit, together with the correlation between one faith and one baptism, brings into perspective the indicative and imperative of the oneness of the Church in Christ (Cf. Eph. 4:3-6). It indicates a concrete perspective on the unity of the Church with the calling for the "actual" response of its obedient faith and, at the same time, the rejection of its ontic abstraction or any blurring of its essential connotations. It coincides with the fact that, despite their reception of "the Spirit who is from God" not "the spirit of the world" (1 Cor. 2:12), Paul had to state that he could not address the Corinthians "as spiritual people" but rather "as people of flesh" and "infants in Christ" (1 Cor. 3:1) in their inner division or broken fellowship. This requires a concrete approach to the contemporary ecclesiological problem of disunity.

In this connection, *CTCV*'s terminological employment of "oneness" seems insightful, since it strongly reflects the biblical outlook as expressed in Gal. 1:5-9 and Eph. 4:4-7 that orbit around the oneness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, even though the ontological derivation of the oneness of the Church from the oneness of God seems rather deterministic.⁷⁵³ The visible unity seems to be an expression of the "oneness", and this distinction itself is important since the implementation of this perspective on the Church makes it possible to look at the discourse through a more theological and critical lens. *CTCV* does not delve into a critical examination, but addresses the imperative of the visible unity of the Church in faith, baptism, eucharist, common life and ministry in the light of the proclamation of the Church's oneness.⁷⁵⁴ The form of unity is fundamentally portrayed as a communion—the communion of local churches—that signifies both the church-ness of local churches and the essentiality of the togetherness of local churches 'present and acting in this world'.⁷⁵⁵ Here, it needs be stated

⁷⁵⁰ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 44-45, 109.

⁷⁵¹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 110

⁷⁵² Berkouwer opposes the views of mere symbolism and sacramentalism on baptism, and argues that baptism as means of grace ordained by God should not be approached without connecting this to the historical reality of salvific work of Christ on the cross, the faith of believers resting on the Word of God, the imperative to life in holiness and so forth. Baptism cannot be construed as the "cause" of salvation since, in the sovereignty of God, there is only one: the salvific work of Christ in history (G. C. Berkouwer, *De Sacramenten* (Kampen: Kok, 1954), 139-172. See also, Herman Ridderbos, *Paul*, 410-411.). Ridderbos intimates the corporate meaning of baptism by saying that baptism incorporates 'the one baptised into this corporate ("bodily") unity between Christ and his own (Rom. 6:5)', and here Ridderbos alludes to 'the common mode of existence of "the many" in Adam and in Christ (Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*, trans. by John Richard De Witt (Grand Rapids, Mi./Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 1997), 400-401.)'. Van der Kooi and van den Brink also argue against the purely individualistic understanding of baptism and emphasise that it presupposes and involves the covenantal community that walks together with the baptised 'along the road of faith, prayer, and obedience (Cornelis van der Kooi and Gijsbert van den Brink, *Christian Dogmatics: An Introduction*, 608-609.)'.

⁷⁵³ *CTCV*, 22.

⁷⁵⁴ *CTCV*, 37. The common faith, gospel, baptism, holy communion and ministry are pointed out continuously as the essential elements of the visible unity of the Church (Cf. 'Reports of the Sections III', *On the Way to Fuller Koinonia: Faith and Order Paper no. 166*, ed. by Günther Gassmann (Geneva: WCC, 1994.), 247-251. See also, Erlinda N. Senturias and Theodore A. Gill Jr., *Encountering the God of Life Report of the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches*, ed. by Erlinda N. Senturias and Theodore A. Gill, Jr. (Geneva: WCC, 2014), 90.).

⁷⁵⁵ *CTCV*, 31. See also, World Council of Churches and Roman Catholic Church, 'The Church: Local and Universal: A Study Document Commissioned and Received by the Joint Working Group', in *Growth in Agreement II: Reports and Agreed Statements of Ecumenical Conversations on a World Level, 1982-1998*, ed. by Jeffrey Gros, FSC, Harding Meyer and William G. Rusch (Geneva: WCC, 2000), 867. It is thus regarded justifiable to characterise the local churches as *loco-catholic*. It squares with Newbigin's understanding of the true meaning of the catholicity of the church: "The true catholicity of the church, rooted in the being of the Triune God, is such

that discussion on the elements of unity—in its content, form, and emphasis—should be characterised by and generated from the biblical outlook on the "gift and calling" nature of the oneness of the Church. It not only intimates the rejection of the perception of the oneness of the Church in terms of its givenness only, but also poses a question concerning the nature of the communion itself.

In this manner, as stated in the previous chapter on *CTCV*, the structure of the *givenness/gift* and *calling* of the Church in *CTCV* appears to lopsidedly emphasise the former at the cost of the latter. The origin and life of the Church is explicated in terms of its derivation from and dependence on the Triune God in rejection of its self-sufficiency.⁷⁵⁶ The term *koinonia* is evoked together with this understanding on which the Church's belonging to God is grounded. *Koinonia*, as *CTCV* claims, was initiated and will be fulfilled by God for all creation.⁷⁵⁷ The language of givenness is also detected in the expressions such as 'sign and servant of God's design for the world' or 'reflection of the communion of the Triune God'.⁷⁵⁸ For sure, one cannot suggest that the sense of givenness is all that there is in *CTCV*'s depiction of the Church. Nevertheless, the lack of the subjectivity of the faith-response of the Church in those expressions fails to imbue the sheer seriousness of the testing of the Word that cannot be taken lightly in the reality of its life and struggle. Putting weight on the ontological givenness of the Church along with its derivativeness, dependency and belonging poses a danger of taking refuge in the possession of the formula "gift and calling" without taking the embedded motive of the gospel within it by way of critical appeal to the response of faith. It means, rather ironically, the loss of concreteness in discourse.

In fact, the oneness of the Church as "gift and calling" throws a serious question as to whether the discussion on the visible unity of the Church truly is formulated in correspondence to the nature of its oneness. The oneness of the Church is correlated with the oneness of the gospel of salvation, and this correlativity is utterly significant in light of the coexistence between truth and oneness. It means that truth in a biblical sense—epitomised in the gospel of Jesus Christ—does not exist in isolation, but is correlated to faith and conducive to the manifestation of the oneness of the Church in Christ and the Spirit. The oneness of the Church and the oneness of the truth are ascertained to be concurrent—in the sense of "occurring together"—and this concurrence can only be perceived in terms of the imperative from the Lord on the basis of the indicative of the gift of oneness. For this reason, any discourse on visible unity and its essential elements with the presumption of *a priori* givenness of oneness does not allude to the deeper reality of division: discordance in regards to the single gospel of salvation.

At this juncture, it appears crucial to take note of the tie between the common (gemeenschappelijk) faith and the unity (eenheid) of the Church in Berkouwer's account.⁷⁵⁹ Berkouwer relates the Holy Spirit to the catholicity/universality of the single gospel of Jesus Christ to which the Church is called to witness in faith in a given context: "...the holy Church is not confined, bound, or limited to a certain place or to certain persons but is spread and dispersed over the whole world; and yet is joined and united with heart and will, by the power of faith, in one and the same Spirit" (Belgic Confession Art. 27.). It resonates with the Irenaeus motif of the connection between the Spirit and the truth—the salvific reality

that neither does universality cancel the particularity of each "place", nor does locality deny universality, for the "full flowering of the life of Christ must be present in each local Church" (Lesslie Newbigin, 'What is "a Local Church Truly United"?' (1976), *The Ecumenical Movement: An Anthology of Key Texts and Voices*, ed. by Michael Kinnamon and Brian E. Cope (Geneva: WCC, 1997), 116.).

⁷⁵⁶ *CTCV*, 13.

⁷⁵⁷ *CTCV*, 13.

⁷⁵⁸ *CTCV*, 25.

⁷⁵⁹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 109.

entailing the continuity between the Old and New Testament as well as apostolicity.⁷⁶⁰ Faith and the unity of the Church do not contradict each other. At the same time, two related points are required to be explored concerning the authority of the gospel on the contents of the witness in the form of confession—*homologia*.⁷⁶¹ The testing motif of the gospel over the confessions of faith is formulated in peculiar circumstances in which the involvement of certain philosophical, linguistic, cultural and polemical backdrop cannot be ignored.⁷⁶² It pertains to the danger of "plus" or "minus" of a specific confession due to either the absolutisation of a certain set of dogmas or the obfuscation or the darkening of the single gospel of salvation.⁷⁶³ This warning is utterly crucial in grasping the possibility of the "loss" of the light of the gospel, since falling into such danger will result in dogmatic fossilisation or confessional deformation through contextualistic modification.⁷⁶⁴ It needs be considered here, however, that this "loss" does not take place only in the field of theological exercise, but more importantly, in the real life of the Church as well by dint of the influence of theology as such. The concern about "plus" and "minus" must seriously take into consideration the outlook on the witnessing life of the Church in reality. In this sense, Berkouwer's remark on the personal nature of the confession of the Church needs be underscored. He explains that, in the New Testament, *homologia* primarily has to do with the confession or renouncement of the Lord in public—'the personal acknowledgement of Christ'.⁷⁶⁵ It is the "directed truth" (*gerichte waarheid*) and involves the confessing person.⁷⁶⁶ The personal nature of the confession is also

⁷⁶⁰ Irenaeus' articulation on the Spirit and the truth within the polemical context is expressed with "*ubi-ibi*" dictum, which Berkouwer cites in his ecclesiology over against Rome's view on apostolic succession (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 90-91. See also, Hans von Campenhausen, *Ecclesiastical Authority and Spiritual Power in the Church of the First Three Centuries*, trans. by J. A. Baker (London: Black, 1969), 170.). It actually refers to the activity of the Spirit in the context of the transmission of truth—'the Spirit is truth (Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against the Heresies*, 3.24.1. The employed version is Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against the Heresies Book III*, trans. by Matthew C. Steenberg and Dominic J. Unger (New York: Paulist Press, 2012).). For Irenaeus, the Spirit's role in the Church is critical. Smit also states that, for Irenaeus, the Spirit preserves, augments, and vivifies the truth in the Church (Peter-Ben Smit, 'The Reception of the Truth at Baptism and the Church as Epistemological Principle in the Work of Irenaeus of Lyons', *Ecclesiology* 7/3 (2011), 363. See also, Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against the Heresies*, 3.24.1-2.). The continuity between the Old and New Testament, which is the apostles' understanding, is tied with the apostolicity of the truth in the one Spirit, and they all together echo the orthodox faith of the Church (Cf. Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against the Heresies*, 3.1.2, 3.2.1-2, 3.11.7. See also, Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against the Heresies*, 4.32.2. The employed version is *Ante-Nicene Fathers Vol.1 - The Apostolic Fathers, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus*, ed. by Philip Schaff, Alexander Roberts, and James Donaldson (Grand Rapids: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1885).).

⁷⁶¹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 239-240, *De Kerk II*, 93.

⁷⁶² Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 106-107.

⁷⁶³ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 239-240.

⁷⁶⁴ This line of understanding corresponds to Choi's concept of 'hermeneutical circulation between text and context' in ecclesiology (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 26.). Van der Borghat portrays the distinct character of confession in Reformed ecclesiology: 'Always referring beyond itself to the word of God, each confession of the church is contextual *in tempo et in loco*, never providing a full and definite response to God's call (Eddy Van der Borghat, "Reformed Ecclesiology", in *The Routledge Companion to the Christian Church*, ed. by Gerard Mannion and Lewis S. Mudge (New York and London: Routledge, 2010), 188.). Brinkman also adheres to the notion that a desirable approach to contextualisation is to embrace contextuality in particularity that goes over contextual boundaries, reflecting the universal relevance and meaningfulness with the exclusion of an attitude of absolutism on its own (Martien E. Brinkman, "Contextual Theology, Tradition and Heresy", in *Christian Identity in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, ed. by Martien E. Brinkman and Dirk van Keulen, (Zoetermeer: Meinema, 2003), 118-120, 124-129.). Berkouwer notes that the apostolic calling of the Church is compromised when it fails to respond to the faced situations with new questions and challenges due to the fear of dogmatic deformation (Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 120-121.).

⁷⁶⁵ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 93. Mare points out the public nature of confession (Matt. 10:32), its religious content of calling Jesus Christ as the 'Saviour and Lord (Rom. 10:9; cf. Phil. 2:11)', of 'his deity as the Son of God (Matt 16:16; 1 John 4:15)' and his incarnation' (1 John 4:2; 2 John 7) (W H. Mare, "Confession", in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. by Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984), 262.).

⁷⁶⁶ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 93-94. Moo also explains that "'truth" in the NT is not simply something to which one must give mental assent; it is something to be done, to be obeyed (Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 1996), 103.). Irenaeus' explication of the truth is noteworthy. For him, truth is a consequence of 'the divine revelatory activity (Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against the Heresies*, 4.32.2.), and the truth is the faith confessed by the Church, emanating from participation in God, which

of a religious character—confessing the Lord—and, at the same time, has the real danger of renouncement, highlighting the seriousness of the "centre" question over the single gospel of salvation.⁷⁶⁷ Moreover, the very personal and religious directedness of the confession of the Church cannot be deemed as being formulated in a field of the void, but should be conceived in correlation to the presence and work of "the Spirit of truth (Jn. 14:17)" in the Church.⁷⁶⁸

Another related subject is Berkouwer's viewpoint on the genuine pluriformity in that it critiques the sort that allows and perpetuates the actual plurality in disunity veiled with the concept "pluriformity". It appears that Berkouwer derives the principle of unity in diversity from 1 Cor. 12—let alone his reference to the plurality of the Gospels and Heb. 1—in that the motif of fellowship together with that of "One Shepherd and one flock" takes up the central position that the diversity of callings and gifts serves.⁷⁶⁹ Indeed, Berkouwer's discourse on unity in relation to diversity has a contextual limit in a sense that it does not cover in depth the issues in diversity that would occupy an important position in ecumenical discourses from the Uppsala Assembly to the 21st Century. His account of legitimate confession does not deal with the contemporary issues related to diversity in ecclesiology. Nonetheless, he still provides a valuable ecclesiological insight which could function as a critical principle in regards to legitimate pluriformity in Reformed ecclesiology. Berkouwer's emphasis, as far as the legitimate pluriformity is concerned, is on "serving" the fellowship here, and it coincides with the notion that the Church as the "body" of Christ has members with diverse gifts and callings that originate from the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:4-14, 27-30). Due to the central motif of the oneness of the Spirit through whom God works in the members of the body (1 Cor. 12:6), the question of legitimate pluriformity in ecclesiological discussion is faced with the critical testing that inquires whether a certain expression of pluriformity truly reflects the reality of the fellowship in the faith in Christ or rather lives with the actual plurality of fundamentally discordant beliefs. It underlines the ecclesiological significance of the "material" question concerning doctrinal divergences, which sets itself against not only doctrinal/ecclesiological rigorism that absolutises those that do not have to do with the "material" of doctrines, e.g. philosophical structure and cultural elements, but also relativism that compromises or blurs the outlook on the singleness of the faith in Christ.⁷⁷⁰ It does not mean the uselessness of the "forms" of expression, but points out the necessity of the consideration of their relative significance in comparison to the absolute importance of the "material" to which every claim of legitimate pluriformity must appeal and subject itself for examination.

brings forth the knowledge of God corresponding to the vision of God (Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against the Heresies*, 4.20.5.). As the nature of the truth of the Church derives from the Spirit who is also detected in the Father and the Son, Irenaeus argues that, by looking at the truth and the Church, one can find God in His true nature. The Spirit is life (Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against the Heresies*, 5.10.2.), and thus, for Irenaeus, receiving the truth simultaneously means gaining the eternal life in the Spirit (Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against the Heresies*, 3.24.1, 5.10.2, 4.).

⁷⁶⁷ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 99.

⁷⁶⁸ Irenaeus also understands that the Spirit evenly dwells in every person in the Church (Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against the Heresies*, 3.4.2.).

⁷⁶⁹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 63-64, 86.

⁷⁷⁰ It appears that Calvin also has in mind the principal articles of faith that form the unity of the Church, and the disagreements over the "other" issues must not disturb the unity. What is noticeable is that, while the debates on such subjects are not "forbidden", Calvin displays the sense of provisionality that stems from the acknowledgement of the limitedness of human judgment. He does not pinpoint with exactitude which articles are primary/essential, but it seems clear that they are meant to be soteriologically discerned: 'Non enim unius sunt formae omnia verae doctrinae capita. Sunt quaedam ita necessaria cognitu, ut fixa esse et indubitata omnibus oporteat, ceu propria religionis placita: qualia sunt, Unum esse Deum: Christum Deum esse, ac Dei Fillium: In Dei misericordia salutem nobis consistere, et similia. Sunt alia, quae inter ecclesias controversa, fidei tamen unitatem non dirimant...Primum quidem ut per omni consentiamus: sed quoniam nemo est qui non aliqua ignorantiae nubecula obvolutus sit, aut nullam relinquamus ecclesiam oportet, aut hallucinationem condonemus in iis rebus, quae et inviolata religionis summa et citra salutis iacturam ignorari possint (Jean Calvin, *Institutio Christianae Religionis*, IV.1.12.)'.

The linkage between legitimate diversity and the Holy Spirit in *CTCV* should also be underlined, since it not only expresses diversity against the backdrop of the situated contexts of the Church in which the Holy Spirit operates, but also prevents any relativistic proclivity that refuses the normativity of the confession of the Church or any justification of ulterior and unjustifiable motives by use of the term "diversity".⁷⁷¹ Another significant facet is the emergence of the "fellowship" in the understanding of diversity, insinuating that diversity can never signify mere individuality, but rather strongly connotes "togetherness" in the common faith in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. Here, the commonness of faith itself, which is correlated to the commonness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, is not to be simply dismissed as an insufficient notion for relativism, but should be taken seriously due to its conceptual validity from an ecclesiological perspective. The "commonness" is, ecclesologically speaking, a sharp critical question to the real life and witness of the Church in situated contexts instead of being a merely abstract theoretical inquiry, since the "commonness" itself is the gift and calling, which calls for the faithful answer from the Church "here and now".⁷⁷² It is in the same vein with the idea of the context-sensitiveness of the work of the Holy Spirit over against static theoretical abstraction.⁷⁷³ It indicates—following the motif of the anointing of the Holy Spirit on Jesus Christ and believers afterwards without losing the thesis of Logos Christology—the presence and work of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit in the present in dynamic engagement with the concrete experiences of the Church.⁷⁷⁴ The subsequent point would be the manifestation of the one Holy Spirit in diverse contexts, strongly upholding the sense of the togetherness of believers.⁷⁷⁵ The commonness and the context-sensitiveness of the faith-expression of the Church, therefore, are of concurrent nature, and the nature of concurrence breathes together with the correlation between revelation and faith. The reason for the rejection of the confessional exclusivism exhibited with the fixation of a particular expression of the gospel without serious reflection on the work of "the Spirit of truth (Jn. 16:13)" in the changing context is found here, and the concept of "legitimate diversity", if understood in light of the Scripture, is an illuminating ecclesiological insight.⁷⁷⁶

5.1.2. On the Holiness of the Church

As regards the holiness of the Church, Berkouwer offers several important insights that centre around his concrete and correlative outlook on the Church. The concreteness of holiness is associated with the light of purity away from sinfulness, corruption and evil.⁷⁷⁷ It intimates the indicative and imperative of holiness together with its unique nature in distinction from legalism and indifferentism. The indicative and imperative of holiness exhibit correlativity as Berkouwer elucidates the radical newness of the Church transitioned from the former way of living without Christ, involving the objective reality of the election of the Church, its being God's people, holy and sanctified people and its freedom from the power of death and sin

⁷⁷¹ *CTCV*, 28-30.

⁷⁷² Cf. Faith and Order, *Confessing the One Faith*, xx-xxiii.

⁷⁷³ Cf. Cornelis van der Kooi, *This Incredibly Benevolent Force: The Holy Spirit in the Reformed Theology and Spirituality* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018), 38.

⁷⁷⁴ Cf. Cornelis van der Kooi, *This Incredibly Benevolent Force: The Holy Spirit in the Reformed Theology and Spirituality*, 36.

⁷⁷⁵ Cornelis van der Kooi, *This Incredibly Benevolent Force*, 85-86.

⁷⁷⁶ Kim takes note that the diversity of theological perspectives and practices of churches according to different contextual factors existed 'throughout Christian history'. She refers to the multiplicity of the apostles and the Gospels in support of legitimate diversity over against Christian uniformity (Kirsteen Kim, "Afterword: Denomination in Global Perspective", in *Denomination: Assessing an Ecclesiological Category*, ed. by Paul M. Collins and Barry Ensign-George (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 171-173.).

⁷⁷⁷ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 131-132.

(Eph. 4:22, 1 Cor. 1:2, Rom. 8:2, 1 Pet. 2:9-10.).⁷⁷⁸ This objectivity cannot be dissociated from the subjectivity of the calling for holiness, and Berkouwer rightly pinpoints the illegitimacy of drawing distinction between the two as if each can be formulated in separation from another. Instead, he draws attention to the meaningfulness of *credo*, which, in light of the Scripture, evokes the correlative perception of holiness.⁷⁷⁹ The correlativity here is based on the Church's fundamental relatedness to Christ, which does not legitimise a speculative scrutiny over "holiness" on its own.⁷⁸⁰ 1 Peter demonstrates this reality rather clearly by relating the Church's being "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation and a people for his own possession" to the Church's calling to "proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light (1 Pet. 2:9) [ESV]". The Church's being born again "through the living and abiding word of God" leads to the imperative of putting "away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander (1 Pet. 1:23-2:1.) [ESV]". Also, the Church's being the people of God and receiving His mercy does not stand in isolation, but is immediately followed by the exhortation to "abstain from the passions of the flesh (1 Pet. 2:11) [ESV]". It needs be noted that the Church's calling to holiness is also "proclamatory" and has "witnessing" character (1. Pet. 2:9, 12), and it connotes the essential involvement of the primarily religious motif of holiness in direction to glorifying God: loving God (Deut. 6:4-5, Matt. 22:37-40, Mk. 12:29-31).⁷⁸¹

The depth of the correlativity of holiness can be discerned in Berkouwer's enunciation of the unique *fascinans* of the Church as well as of the reality of sin and imperfection in the life of the Church. *Fascinans* denotes the correlative reality of the newness in the presence of the Spirit in which the believers are called to live and to witness. Highlighting *fascinans*, at the same time, refuses to fixate eyes on the impenetrable provisionality of "not yet" due to the remaining sins, whose formative fixation has a danger of actually becoming a reason for self-explanatory excuse for leniency to disobedience, but focuses on the rightful calling for the fruit of holiness through repentance and faith in the Holy Spirit. The newness of life in freedom in the promised Spirit comes through hearing and believing the message of the gospel (Gal. 3:2, 5),⁷⁸² and this "new creation (Gal. 6:15)" does not approve of a hint of digressing into living in accordance with "the desires of the flesh (Gal. 5:13, 16-17 [ESV])" or abandoning or distorting the principle of living by the Spirit (Gal. 6:16), which results in "the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23)". It is as Fee depicts:

'By his crucifixion Christ has pronounced the death sentence on *all* that is "flesh (2 Cor. 5:14)" and thus has effected for the believer a dramatic and real death regarding the former way of life. The time of the old order is over; the new order has come: behold *all things* are new (2 Cor. 5:17); the only thing that counts is the "new creation (Gal. 6:15)".'⁷⁸³

⁷⁷⁸ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 135.

⁷⁷⁹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 136.

⁷⁸⁰ Cf. Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 137-138.

⁷⁸¹ Cf. *De Kerk II*, 141.

⁷⁸² 'Itaque gloriatur Paulus se per Evangelium genuisse Corinthios, eosque apostolatus sui sigillum esse (1 Cor. 4:15.): imo se non esse literalem ministrum, qui tantum sonitu vocis aures percusserit, sed datam sibi efficaciam Spiritus, ne inutilis sit doctrina (1 Cor. 9:2, 2 Cor. 3:6.). Quo sensu etiam alibi Evangelium suum fuisse negat tantum in sermone, sed in virtute (1 Thess. 1:5.). Affirmat etiam Galatas ex auditu fidei Spiritum accepisse (Gal. 3:2.) (Calvin, *Institutio*, IV.1.6.).'

⁷⁸³ Gordon D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), 455. Fee describes that the contrast between the flesh and the Spirit in Paul's usage denotes the 'two forms of eschatological existence'. Fee continues: 'The "flesh" perceives things from the old age point of view, where value and significance lie in power, influence, wealth, and wisdom (cf. 1 Cor. 1:26-31). But in Christ, all of that has passed away; behold, the new has come, the time of the Spirit, in which there has been a total, radical restructuring of value and significance. The paradigm is the cross: the power lies not in externals, but in the Spirit, who indwells believers and by grace is renewing the "inner person (4:16)", transforming us into God's

It means the newness of reality Christ brought to the believers through the Spirit is that they are able to, through the obedience of faith, manifest the transformed way of living that demonstrates 'God's true (divinely given) righteousness' in Christ, with whom they 'recognise their identity'.⁷⁸⁴ It is a corporate *fascinans* since the newness in the Spirit intends the communal and corporate nature without losing an individual dimension.⁷⁸⁵ In this way, the exhortation in Galatians points at the correlation between the indicative and imperative of the new life in the Spirit, which is added with the phrases such as "do not be deceived (Gal. 6:7)" and "keep in step with the Spirit (Gal. 5:25)". The correlation here centres round the faith that embraces the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This reality is, as Keener explicates, also exemplified in Paul's command to 'account oneself dead to sin but alive to God in Christ' in Rom. 6:11, which is posited between the indicative of the new 'identity of believers' (Rom. 6:1-10) and the imperative of holy living in devotion to God (Rom. 6:12-23).⁷⁸⁶ The outlook on faith is decisively significant to keep the relational perspective on the holiness of the Church.

The correlation between the indicative and the imperative is not a mere theological formula to contemplate on, but addresses the holiness of the Church on the concrete level of reality. The seriousness of biblical warnings to the believers challenges the idea that the matter of holiness is primarily a theoretical issue. For instance, the warning in Heb. 4 in reflection on the examples of the Old Testament with Moses, is directed at the believers in the New Testament, indicating the continuity of the character of God in His sovereignty: "...while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened (Heb. 4:1-2 [ESV])".

It rejects the mechanical take on the newness in the Holy Spirit that loses sight of the imperative of the faith-response of obedience. It also rebuts the naturalistic subjectivism that does not consider the full significance of the indicative of the new reality in the Spirit and thereby makes the message of the imperative itself irrelevant, merely relative or unimportant. Van der Kooi and van den Brink state that the purifying fire or renewal of the Holy Spirit 'is not just pleasant; the Spirit brings a lot of unrest to' the life of the Church. This is to be understood in the concrete view of the *fascinans*.⁷⁸⁷ The meaningfulness of *credo ecclesiam* comes through only when the correlative *fascinans* of the holiness of the Church is given its

own likeness (ultimately portrayed in Christ through the cross) (Fee, *God's Empowering Presence*, 821. See also, Richard J. Plantinga, Thomas R. Thompson and Matthew D. Lundberg, *An Introduction to Christian Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 307-308.). Moo employs the expression 'narrowly human, this-worldly principles and values' to depict the characteristic of the flesh (Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 418.). Moo also points out that his interpretation of Rom. 7:13-25 as Paul's depiction of 'himself in solidarity with the Jewish people' in the unregenerate state does not indicate that there is no struggle with sin in the Christian life in the Spirit. He argues that 'while "transferred" into the new realm, ruled by Christ and righteousness, believers are still prone to obey those past masters, sin and the flesh...For, while the believer continues to be influenced by both "realms," Paul makes it clear that he belongs to the new realm. In identification with Christ, he has died to sin (6:2), has been taken out of the enveloping power of the flesh (8:9), and has been made a slave of God (6:22) (Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 441-449.).

⁷⁸⁴ Craig S. Keener, *The Mind of the Spirit: Paul's Approach to Transformed Thinking* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016), 126. Keener's point that 'the actual division' between those who are 'in the flesh' and 'those who have the Spirit' is grounded 'not on the degree of accommodation to the "flesh" but on whether or not the Spirit is active and bringing transformation' deserves to be noted here (Craig S. Keener, *The Mind of the Spirit: Paul's Approach to Transformed Thinking*, 126-127.).

⁷⁸⁵ Van der Kooi and van den Brink pinpoint an important aspect of the work of the Spirit in the New Testament that it is primarily communal rather than individualistic (Cornelis van der Kooi and Gijsbert van den Brink, *Christian Dogmatics*, 496.). It coincides with Berkouwer's view that, while the fellowship of the body of Christ rejects individualism, the individuality of members is not downplayed in the dynamic of God's salvation (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 98.).

⁷⁸⁶ Craig S. Keener, *The Mind of the Spirit*, 50-51.

⁷⁸⁷ Cornelis van der Kooi and Gijsbert van den Brink, *Christian Dogmatics*, 497.

due recognition via the life and witness of the Church under the rule of Christ through the Spirit.

It seems important to note that, only when the correlative *fascinans* comes fully in sight, the senselessness of sin in the context of the life of the Church is disclosed. In spite of his firm view that 'sin and infirmity *do* remain in' the believers against their will, Berkouwer terms sin and imperfection of the Church "the conundrum" because of its senselessness and meaninglessness as seen in the light of the grace of God in Jesus Christ that has come to be known, realised and confessed by the *congregatio fidelium*.⁷⁸⁸ He finds comfort for the sorrow for infirmities and weaknesses 'in the Lord's Supper formulary' in which the comforting (vertroostend) light of Heb. 4—seemingly Heb. 4:14-16—shines forth.⁷⁸⁹ The sorrow itself stems from the grace of the Holy Spirit ('de genade van de Heilige Geest'). Berkouwer, therefore, expresses that:

'We are sorry for our vestigial sins, and the whole future is opened up as we are *received again into favour*...Guilt is confessed at the same moment as we sin against our will, and we protest against our sin at the same moment as we struggle in the flesh. We stumble and are sad—but we also rise again'.⁷⁹⁰

Still, the sin and imperfection of the Church remains "the conundrum" and is not to be rationalised and quickly erased by its explicability and the momentary expression of the sorrow of the heart.⁷⁹¹ As Berkouwer argues, the strangeness of sin increases when it is 'committed by a man who is *redeemed from sin* and who knows and experiences, in thanksgiving, that Christ has made *atonement for him*'.⁷⁹² In 1 Cor. 6:15, 19 and Gal. 1:7, 3:1, Paul is astonished and baffled at the '*sin within the Church*' and the believers' opting for a different gospel.⁷⁹³ The strangeness of sin intimates that the remaining infirmities and sins, as they are acerbically detected, are to be fought against in the Holy Spirit by the believers whilst they are "taking their refuge in the blood, death, passion, and obedience of" Christ "in whom they have remission of sins, through faith in Him" (Belgic Confession, Art. 29.).

This perspective on the strangeness of sin and estrangement needs be asserted strongly together with the indicative of the grace of God in Christ realised and manifested through the Spirit in the life of the Church. The reality the Church enjoys in the presence of God—the redemptive and cleansing sacrifice of Christ (Heb. 9:14, 10:10) and the Spirit's presence, empowerment for witness (Jn. 16:7-11) and guidance into "all the truth (Jn. 16:13)"—cannot turn into a deterministic asylum from the danger of unbelief, disobedience and even apostasy through the hardening of the heart "by the deceitfulness of sin (Heb. 3:13) [ESV]". Also, the sin and the hardening of the heart, in its primary directedness against the Triune God (Heb. 10:26-29), are not to be dealt with via siding with pluralism or relativism with the abstract slogan of diversity. The extent of estrangement can only be seen and recognised in reality through the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ, as were the cases in Galatians and 1 Corinthians. The estrangement itself is, then, regarded not as a mere possibility or foreseeable occurrence, but as the conundrum and astonishment that, being recognised through the testing of the gospel, "might" evoke the heartfelt confession of guilt. The light of the gospel testified by the Holy Spirit, not naturalist logic and presuppositions, judges the rebellious and strange nature of sins and disobedience of the individuals and even of the Church. This insight must

⁷⁸⁸ G. C. Berkouwer, *Sin*, trans. by Philip C. Holtrop (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 298. See also, G. C. Berkouwer, *De Zonde II: Wezen en Verbreiding der Zonde* (Kampen: Kok, 1960), 73.

⁷⁸⁹ Berkouwer, *De Zonde II*, 72-73.

⁷⁹⁰ Berkouwer, *Sin*, 297-298. Berkouwer, *De Zonde II*, 73-74.

⁷⁹¹ Cf. Berkouwer, *De Zonde II*, 74.

⁷⁹² Berkouwer, *Sin*, 141, *De Zonde I*, 132.

⁷⁹³ Berkouwer, *Sin*, 141-142, *De Zonde I*, 132.

be implemented in the concrete ecclesial settings via preaching, teaching, counselling and discipline in the fear of God to whom only the judgment belongs (Heb. 10:30-31).

At this point, keeping in mind the discussions above, careful examination on *CTCV*'s discourse on the holiness of the Church needs be made in order to gain insightful points. However, it shall begin with some critical remarks on the way in which holiness is explicated especially in relation to sin in the document. In order to make clear the route of development in the conceptualisation of the holiness and sin of the Church in *CTCV*, it is important to look at the document in light of the previous ones: *NPC* and *NMC*.

NPC's and *NMC*'s depictions of the three elements of human reality of the Church are set forth in a compartmentalised way: change, 'individual, cultural and historical conditioning' and 'the power of sin'.⁷⁹⁴ As the full description of *NMC* goes:

'...the Church is...exposed to: change, which allows for both positive development and growth as well as for the negative possibility of decline and distortion; individual, cultural and historical conditioning which can contribute to a richness of insights and expressions of faith, but also to relativizing tendencies or to absolutising particular views; the power of sin'.⁷⁹⁵

These are arguably the most important facets in the discussion of unity and diversity, in that they are reasons why diverse expressions of faith by the churches are originated and given substantial attention. *CTCV* takes on the *NMC*'s remark on the human reality of the Church. It affirms change and 'cultural and historical factors' to be 'the conditions of the world' to which human beings – by extension the Church 'as an historical reality' – are subjected. These factors can become 'a positive or a negative' influence on the 'faith, life and witness' of the Church.⁷⁹⁶ The word "sin" is not mentioned here, but by taking into account the notion that 'the Church is made up of human beings', it is still not too far-fetched to see the possible involvement of sin in the process of negative "change" and the negative influence of contextual factors on the Church.⁷⁹⁷

It is a serious inquiry over the critical testing of the gospel on the concrete expressions of faith or ecclesial manifestations that are substantiated by the socio-cultural norms and values, so long as the contextual dimensions never exist in vacuum or purely neutral space, but always entail certain "theses" of norms and values. Working negatively, they could indeed seriously threaten the sound doctrines and life of the Church as was in the period of Ahab's reign and the remnants of Israel (Belgic Confession, Art. 27. 1 Kg. 19:18). The Church's submission to the Lord and being the light of the world as His followers are definite imperatives, and they form normative criteria for testing. The testing radically calls for the "concrete" manifestation of the message of the gospel through the life and witness of the Church. It is indeed "radical" since nothing other than the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ is allowed to take up a determining position in the "contents" of ecclesiology, e.g. national, racial and socio-cultural identities, political convictions and so forth. For instance,

⁷⁹⁴ *NPC*, 37, *NMC*, 50.

⁷⁹⁵ *NMC*, 50.

⁷⁹⁶ *CTCV*, 34.

⁷⁹⁷ *CTCV*, 35. Along with the focal attention to the socio-cultural identities "within"—not "outside"—the ecclesiological configuration and the life of the Church, Van der Borght also expresses on this passage that 'it remains uncertain whether more or less attention for socio-cultural identities is to be brought under a more neutral cultural contextualisation or whether they should be understood as sin (Eduardus A. J. G. Van der Borght, "No Longer Strangers or Pilgrims in the Church?: Socio-Cultural Identities in the Faith and Order Document *Nature and Mission of the Church*", in *Strangers and Pilgrims on Earth: Essays in Honour of Abraham van de Beek*, ed. by E. Van der Borght and P. van Geest (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2012), 436.)'. He points out the danger of marking the destructive potential of socio-cultural divergences merely as outside problems, and thereby calls for substantial theological answers to them as the issues "within" the Church (Eduardus A. J. G. Van der Borght, "No Longer Strangers or Pilgrims in the Church?", 441-442.).

in the case of socio-cultural identities, Van der Borgh't's perspective on them in relation to the fundamental Christian identity as "belonging" to Christ is noteworthy:

'...We have to be careful how we understand the sacrament of baptism. Baptism does not imply a *tabula rasa*. When people become Christian, they do not lose their previous identities, but their identities are brought into perspective. Their membership in the body of Christ now becomes their primary identity. This has consequences for all other identity markers in the life of a Christian. They should no longer assert absolute claims...The defining point is that the Christian belongs to Christ, but the other identity markers remain'.⁷⁹⁸

Simultaneously, this dynamic must be comprehended in terms of the newness of the life of the Church in the Spirit and no longer in the flesh where the believers are called to "crucify the flesh with the works thereof" (Belgic Confession, Art. 29.).⁷⁹⁹ It is a matter of constant and renewed affirmation of the primacy and normativity of the Church's "belonging" to Christ, which entails the imperative of its "submission" to the message of His gospel in faith.

Now, *CTCV*'s portrayal of holiness takes on *NMC*'s suggestion for convergent statement:

'The relationship between sin and holiness in the Church is not a relationship of two equal realities, because sin and holiness do not exist on the same level. Rather, holiness denotes the Church's nature and God's will for it, while sinfulness is contrary to both (cf. 1 Cor. 15:21-26)'.⁸⁰⁰

Still, one point of important change is that *CTCV* revives the characterisation of sins: either as *moral imperfection* or as *a break in relationship*.⁸⁰¹ *CTCV* also adds that on the point of 'whether and how sin may be systemic' the churches are not in agreement.⁸⁰² The convergence document still reports the conflicting views of the churches on the relationship between the Church's holiness and sin in the same way as *NMC* summarises.⁸⁰³ And yet, *CTCV* saves a section for the positive convergence understanding of the holiness and sin of the Church, which is primarily suggested by *NMC*:

'The Church is the body of Christ; according to his promise, the gates of hell cannot prevail against it (cf. Matt. 16:18). Christ's victory over sin is complete and irreversible, and by Christ's promise and grace Christians have confidence that the Church will always share in the fruits of that victory. They also share the realisation that, in this present age, believers are vulnerable to the power of sin, both individually and collectively. All churches acknowledge the fact of sin among believers and its often grievous impact. All recognise the continual need for Christian self-examination, penitence, conversion (*metanoia*), reconciliation and

⁷⁹⁸ E. A. J. G. Van der Borgh't, *Sunday Morning - The Most Segregated Hour: On Racial Reconciliation as Unfinished Business for Theology in South Africa and Beyond* (Amsterdam: VU University, Faculty of Theology, 2009), 22.

⁷⁹⁹ Fee's explication on holiness is insightful: 'Since in Christ believers have died to both sin (the flesh) and the law, they are to serve God "in the newness of the Spirit (Rom. 7:6)". They must put to death the former way of life (Rom. 6:1-18; 8:12-13; Col. 3:5-11), portrayed in Galatians 5:19-21 as "the works of the flesh," which refers to life before and outside Christ. Such a life is no longer an option for the new people of God, who indeed have become a people by the presence of the Spirit of God. Paul, therefore, understands "putting to death" the works of the flesh as the empowering work of the Spirit (Rom. 8:12-13)..."Holiness" also (especially) means the Holy Spirit living in believers, reproducing the life of Christ within and among them, particularly in their communal relationships...They live differently in their relationships with one another, and are empowered to do so, because they are Spirit people, whatever else they may be.' (Gordon D. Fee, *Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1996), 109.).

⁸⁰⁰ *NMC*, 56.

⁸⁰¹ *CTCV*, 35.

⁸⁰² *CTCV*, 35.

⁸⁰³ *CTCV*, 35.

renewal. Holiness and sin relate to the life of the Church in different and unequal ways. Holiness expresses the Church's identity according to the will of God, while sin stands in contradiction to this identity (cf. Rom. 6:1-11).⁸⁰⁴

It summarises what has been voiced continuously over the holiness and sin of the Church, especially the last two sentences that resemble the *NMC*'s suggestion for convergence statement. The only point of dissimilarity is the wording used in *CTCV*, which is 'the Church's identity according to the will of God', signifying a gist of subjective aspect, whereas *NMC* simply relates the holiness to 'the Church's nature and God's will for it'.⁸⁰⁵

The convergent understanding identifies the Church as triumphant in Christ because of his 'victory over sin' that is 'complete and irreversible' as well as his 'promise and grace' that Christians 'will always share in the fruits of that victory'.⁸⁰⁶ On the other hand, it is also admitted that 'believers are vulnerable to the power of sin, both individually and collectively', and, thus, there is a continuous calling for 'Christian self-examination, penitence, conversion (*metanoia*), reconciliation and renewal'.⁸⁰⁷ It is intriguing to note that, in distinction from the previous documents, *CTCV* does not put a comment on the grounds for contradicting viewpoints on the Church and sin. It seems that, together with the idea that the divine reality of the Church comes before the countering force of sin, the convergent point on the definition of the Church as 'the communion of believers held in personal relationship with God' is related to this outcome.⁸⁰⁸ It explains:

'The Church is fundamentally a communion in the Triune God and, at the same time, a communion whose members partake together in the life and mission of God (cf. Pet. 1:4), who, as Trinity, is the source and focus of all communion. Thus the Church is a divine and a human reality'.⁸⁰⁹

Another important matter to be mentioned is that *CTCV*, following *NPC* and *NMC*, does not provide a clear characterisation of sin other than either '*moral imperfection*' or '*a break in relationship*' without further elaboration. For the latter, pointing at *NPC*'s characterisation of sin as the force that distorted the original *koinonia*, damaging 'the relationship between God and humanity, between human beings, and between humanity and the created order' might be able to clarify the meaning here,⁸¹⁰ but its specific import still remains in ambiguity. This ambiguity, along with that of the meaning of holiness, makes it hard to answer questions such as what it means to say that sin contradicts holiness that pinpoints the nature of God.⁸¹¹

⁸⁰⁴ *CTCV*, 36.

⁸⁰⁵ *CTCV*, 36. *NMC*, 56-Box.

⁸⁰⁶ *CTCV*, 36.

⁸⁰⁷ *CTCV*, 36.

⁸⁰⁸ *CTCV*, 34-35.

⁸⁰⁹ *CTCV*, 23.

⁸¹⁰ *NPC*, 50. The paralleled concepts such as *failure*, '*disobedience to God's will*', and '*rebellion against him*' do not render a clear understanding of what kind of relationship these have with sin itself in *NPC* (*NPC*, 50.).

⁸¹¹ It is the case even while an ecumenical affirmation on mission and evangelism worked out by the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) in 1982 has more pronounced account of sin. First, *CTCV* does not draw on the CWME description of sin, even seeing that the latter relates sin to lostness, 'separation from God', 'submission to evil', and 'the unfulfilled potential of God's image' manifested in personal and corporate forms (World Council of Churches, *Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation* (Geneva: WCC, 1989), Preface, 8, 12.). The cross of Christ is pictured as the place where the sheer magnitude of sin and depth of the love of God are substantiated (World Council of Churches, *Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation*, 8.). Second, the manner of understanding of *metanoia* in the CWME document is not imported by *CTCV* when the former is interlinked with the understanding of conversion 'as a dynamic and ongoing process'—'total transformation of our attitudes and styles of life'—which is associated with the relational aspects of life with God

The *CTCV*'s readopted phrases describing sin as 'moral imperfection' or 'a break in relationship' seem to illuminate the two major veins of understanding of sin and holiness, which can be defined largely as personal or relational. The conception of sin as moral imperfection seems to have room for personal holiness, whereas the understanding that sin is a break in relationship echoes the main theme of relational holiness.⁸¹² Alongside the main theme of *koinonia*, *CTCV*, in general, is inclined more towards the sort of ethics of the Church that resonates with a relational and public ethic than personal piety based on the observance of the commandments. *Koinonia*'s far-reaching range of influence over all related statements from the root of unity to the goal of the unity and mission of the Church confirms this viewpoint. Still, strictly speaking, this line of explication of ethics in the ecclesiology of *CTCV* is not directly related to the holiness of the Church, but to the diakonical calling of the Church.⁸¹³

Moreover, there is also a structural issue with locating these two strands of perception of sin and holiness as if they can only exist within the either-A-or-B framework, exemplified by the depiction of sin as either moral imperfection or as break in relationship. Strictly speaking, *CTCV* does not officially advocate one over the other, but merely introduces that there are, largely speaking, two kinds of perspectives on holiness and sin. It is quite clear that some churches emphasise the personal dimension of holiness a lot more whereas the others opt for the relational holiness. This reality of divergence might require a commentary, but *CTCV* does not offer one. The interwoven question would be: is the Church's relational holiness possible without the personal dimension of holiness? Or, is the latter possible when it lives in a break of relationship? Is a point of view that comprehends holiness and sin in terms of either moral imperfection or break in relationship justifiable? This incongruity calls for a constructive resolution, not a mere description of divergence.

It should be asserted that holiness (and sin) must be understood in essential relation to God, and the subsequent brokenness, depravity and misery as well as the death to sin and the new life in Christ through baptism and faith come into view in connection with one's relationship with God and neighbours. In this sense, holiness and sin fundamentally possess religious-ethical character where "religious" is primary, and being united with Christ and continuing in faithful obedience will manifest in the reflection of the holiness of God that involves both moral and relational dimensions via humility and God's love.⁸¹⁴ Moral and relational dimension of sin and holiness must be seen not separately, but together in the Church's fundamental relatedness to God in Christ.

Now, some remarks on the practice of discipline need be made in order to see that it is "not" isolated from, but interconnected with the proclamation, teaching, Christian living and witness. The interconnection revolves round the centre, the Word of God in its normativity, and it has mainly to do with the question of "how" the Word is understood, grasped and lived

and others, thereby perceiving in a more constructive way the relationship between evangelism and social ethics (World Council of Churches, *Mission and Evangelism*, 12, 33-34.).

⁸¹² Grenz observes that 'in the last hundred years Christian ethics has displayed marked shift away from the focus on the individual moral actor to a relational ethic', thereby underscoring the paradigm shift in the pursuit of holiness from the former to the latter (Stanley J. Grenz, *The Moral Quest: Foundations of Christian Ethics* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 1997), 202.).

⁸¹³ As a matter of fact, *Costly Unity* intimates the linkage between holiness and the Church's moral struggles in terms of promoting JPIC (*Ecclesiology and Ethics*, 5.). This document also does not show an attempt to combine the personal and relational dimension of moral life of the Church (*Ecclesiology and Ethics*, 8-9.). Also, it should be noted that holiness is not to be equated with moral life, which posits a danger of reductionism of holiness, but rather with something other that is manifested through the nature of God.

⁸¹⁴ Cf. J. Ayodeji Adewuya, *Holiness in the Letters of Paul: The Necessary Response to the Gospel* (Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books), 159-163. Highlighting the work of the Spirit, Fee points out the relatedness of faith in the sense of 'faithful devotion to God' and 'utter trust in his trustworthiness' to bearing fruit in horizontal relation: 'true faith for Paul always includes the element of faithfulness; thus true faith for him in this sense, as a fruit of the Spirit, expresses itself in love (Gal 5:6) (Fee, *Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God*, 121.).'

out in the ecclesial context. In other words, the way in which discipline is executed strongly indicates whether or not the centrality of the gospel of Jesus Christ in its fullness of light is truly manifested and represented in the Church. It is a critical question, since what is suggested here is that the practice of discipline in its value judgment and structure concretely shows forth the reality of the presence of the light of the gospel in the life of the Church. It is even when the churches have employed all the important words such as "the gospel", "forgiveness", "holiness", "love", "witness", "the Word" and "the faith" in their preaching, teaching or official statement. It could well be that, albeit the preaching would make use of all the "theologically right" words and phrases, the abuse or negligence of the actual practice of disciplining—the fruit—would disclose the churches' actual state of estrangement from the Word and the Spirit. While being the practice that concerns the corporate people of God, discipline is, first and foremost, the concrete obedience to the command to "love each other (Jn. 15:17)", which pits itself against hateful legalism or unlimited tolerantism. It is loving one another in "the Spirit of truth (Jn. 14:17)", in obedience to the teaching of Jesus Christ, which itself is correlated to loving Him (Jn. 14:23-24, 15:6-7), and in the same way that Jesus has loved His disciples (Jn. 15:12).⁸¹⁵ The heart of discipline is shown forth in the genuine concern for the restoration of the disciplined, the sincere care for the holiness of the corporate body of Christ (1 Cor. 5:6-7), and carrying the love of Christ as expressed in Paul's expression "my beloved children" (τέκνα μου ἀγαπητὰ) in admonition (1 Cor. 4:14).⁸¹⁶ The Christian practice of discipline is placed not above, but under the new command of Jesus Christ, and, in this sense, the area of the practice of discipline is where orthodoxy and orthopraxy distinctively come into sight together (Belgic Confession, Art. 30, 32. See also, Heidelberg Catechism, Art. 85.).⁸¹⁷

The importance of the practice of discipline comes with the genuine concern as to the holiness of the Church in a concrete sense. Its concern is not merely individually focussed, but primarily corporate with an eye on the Church as the people of God: "...to nourish and preserve concord and unity, and to keep all men in obedience to God" (Belgic Confession,

⁸¹⁵ Brower understands that loving God and loving one's neighbour in Matt. 22:36-40 implied in 5:17-20 are the centre of the Law 'in its divine intention' and are made possible for the Church via the new covenantal relationship with God in and through Jesus Christ (Kent Brower, *Holiness in the Gospels* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 2005), 124-125.). Brower's explanation of holiness in terms of love here is not formed in an abstract philosophical way, but exhibits the sense of clear concreteness of Christian living in dynamic relationship with the living God in faith. At the same time, it does not digress into legalism, as the relationship is the source of the holy living expressed in love and total devotion to God. Brower, thus, states that 'anything that interferes with fulfilling the inner intention of the Law is mere legalism (Kent Brower, *Holiness in the Gospels*, 112-126.).

⁸¹⁶ Wall and Keener understand Paul's admonition to the Corinthians for the disciplining of the man that committed incest in the light of the typology of the Passover (Robert W. Wall, "Reading Paul with Acts: The Canonical Shaping of a Holy Church", in *Holiness and Ecclesiology in the New Testament*, ed. by Kent Brower and Andy Johnston (Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge, UK: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2007), 142-145. See also, Craig S. Keener, *1-2 Corinthians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 47-51.). Thus, Keener explains: 'outside the sphere of protection by the paschal lamb's blood (5:7), one remained susceptible to "the destroyer (cf. Ex 12:23; 1 Cor. 10:10)". The purpose here, however, is restorative: so the offender would be brought to repentance and his spirit "saved" in the end (as in 1 Tim 1:20; Matt 18:15-22) (Craig S. Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, 50.)'. The motif of identification of the people of God through the blood of the lamb and the subsequent command of preparing the unleavened bread connote the indicative and imperative of the living in purity in rejection of the leaven of evil and malice amongst the body of Christ (Cf. Wall, "Reading Paul with Acts: The Canonical Shaping of a Holy Church", 143-144. See also, Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, 50.). Wall takes note, at the same time, that James 5 and Jude order the congregation not to expulse, but to rescue wayward believers 'from their sin in order to save them for the age to come'. The common motif here is the principle of keeping the corporate holiness of the body via internal discipline as well as the congregation's 'love and loyalty for its members' particularly for 'those who have lost their spiritual way (Wall, "Reading Paul with Acts", 145.)'.

⁸¹⁷ While upholding the necessity of the lawful and orderly practice of discipline via the authority of the Church, Calvin rejects the stance of rigorous separatism in the practice of discipline since it utterly lacks not only the motif of mercy of God and sincerity, but also the humble acknowledgement of the limitedness of human judgment over the lives of other believers (Calvin, *Institutio*, IV.1.15-16.).

Art. 32.).⁸¹⁸ It is meant to be an act of self-denial and faith in Christ, and, in its very nature of concreteness based in reality and the immediacy of its consequence, the Church is challenged and tested as to its life and witness in obedience to Christ. The lack of self-denial and submission to Christ in the approaches of simplistic legalism and relativistic tolerantism must be addressed. The failure in these cases might have several reasons and take different forms, as was the case in the Jews' simplistic and strictly legalistic verdict of Jesus and Stephen's witness for blasphemy (Jn. 10:30-33, Acts 6:11-8:58),⁸¹⁹ Eli's unfaithfulness and disrespect to God in handling with his sons' sins against Him and His people (1 Sam. 2:29) and Peter's fear of 'those who practice circumcision' (φοβούμενος τοὺς ἐκ περιτομῆς) in Antioch that made him comply with separating the circumcised and the uncircumcised in the context of the table fellowship (Gal 2:12-14).⁸²⁰ The testing of the gospel is directed against all forms of abuse and negligence of discipline, with which the sharp voice of admonition and the clear vision of the holy and consecrated living of the Church in the true freedom in Jesus Christ would fade away within the corporate life of the Church. The centrality of the gospel also connotes the renewal of measurement by the knowledge of God through faith that is thoroughly informed by the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ.⁸²¹ The loss of this centrality signals that the ministry of preaching and teaching, in its interconnection with discipline (Heidelberg Catechism, Art. 83.), fails to mirror the mind of 'the Spirit of Christ' to the congregation.⁸²² It also denotes that, subsequently, the content, motif and purpose of discipline cease to be shaped into a life-saving and restorative practice as regards both individuals and community.

CTCV positions the *diakoinia* of the Church as a constitutive facet of evangelism.⁸²³ And yet, the possibility of drawing constructive insight from this structure is reliant on the absolute imperative of the proclamation of the gospel and of the human response in faith to the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ (Acts 16:30-32). *CTCV*'s indication of the divergence of the churches as to the soteriological question of the possibility of salvation of those who do not believe in the message of the gospel links this phenomenon with the differing emphasis on either evangelism or *diakonia*. However, the desire of God in the phrase in 1 Tim. 2:4 "all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" cannot be dissociated from the concrete imperative of the proclamation of and the faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ as shown in the statement by Paul in 1 Tim. 2:7 "For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle...a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth" in accordance with

⁸¹⁸ Van der Borcht correctly explicates the corporate picture of the motif of discipline in Reformed ecclesiology: 'Since unholy lives lead to disintegration of the Christian community, the exercise of discipline against unholy practices and unsound teaching must safeguard the integrity of the church (Eddy Van der Borcht, "Reformed Ecclesiology", 189).'

⁸¹⁹ Cf. F. F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 188-189.

⁸²⁰ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 184. See also, Troy W. Martin, "Circumcision in Galatia and the Holiness of God's Ecclesiae", in *Holiness and Ecclesiology in the New Testament*, ed. by Kent Brower and Andy Johnston (Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge, UK: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2007), 228.

⁸²¹ Raschke rightly points out that the 'faith is always founded' on the directness of relationship with God—the first-person-second-person relationship'. It coincides with the directedness of the truth: 'The truth of salvation...is the Saviour who saves us and does so through a relationship with us and for the sake of us...Truth lies in the sanctity of the relationship, in the "marriage" of the believer to the One in whom he believes...*Alētheia* is an "unveiling", as a bride before her husband. *Truth is the intimacy of the interpersonal* (Carl Raschke, *The Next Reformation: Why Evangelicals Must Embrace Postmodernity* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 132-134.)'. Raschke's remark grasps the appealing nature of the divine revelation and the involvement of the person in faith.

⁸²² In reference to 1 Cor. 2, Rom. 8, Gal. 2:20 and Gal. 5, Keener argues that the experience by believers of the mind and heart of God together with the empowerment through the Spirit does not stop at their 'initial reception of divine wisdom when they embraced the gospel', but continues till the eschaton (Keener, *The Mind of the Spirit*, 126-128, 195-199.).

⁸²³ Cf. *CTCV*, 58-59.

the sentence "there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" in 1 Tim. 2:5. Speculating on the possibility of salvation outside the Church is not exempt from the danger of establishing a certain theoretical excuse for the absence of actual obedience to the imperative of evangelism, instead of perceiving oneself—with Paul—as being sent by the Lord to the world to proclaim the gospel of salvation. At the same time, emphasising evangelism one-sidedly because of soteriological conviction at the cost of the calling to *diakonia* cannot be deemed justifiable, since, as *CTCV* rightly notes, 'the Church's mission in the world is to proclaim to all people, in word and deed, the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ (cf. Mk.16:15)'.⁸²⁴ The transformed worldview in faith created through the work of the Holy Spirit cannot be restricted to the proclamation of Jesus Christ in words only, but should manifest in deeds in the midst of the world—public witness. Jesus' identification of his followers to be "the light of the world" clearly indicates the publicity of their life and witness in the world. This remark is followed by the further characterisation with the sentence "they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:14-16). Polarising evangelism and *diakonia* cannot be regarded all but the fruit of the darkening of the light of the gospel in the heart of faith.

Berkouwer's positioning of mission within the discourse on the holiness of the Church renders the correlative insight into the understanding of the meaningful presence and proclamation of the Church. The correlative view that does not separate the presence from the proclamation of the Church is significant, primarily because the holiness of the Church cannot be reduced to the inward examination without the driving force of the mission of God to the world. The holiness of the Church expressed in active love cannot conceive the calling for holiness as self-isolation, but can only find its meaningfulness in its oriented-ness to the heart of the gospel: 'God's seeking love'.⁸²⁵ In its union with Christ and through the presence of the Spirit, the Church's presence is identified to be following Christ as His disciples, the meaning of which cannot be contained in mere individualism, but can only come to light in the corporate nature of the community.⁸²⁶ The active presence of the Spirit who witnesses about Jesus Christ is correlated with the reality of the Church's witness about the Saviour (Jn. 15:26-27). The content of proclamation is the gospel of salvation and, as Berkouwer insists, there is no other gospel.⁸²⁷ The Church's discipleship is not an arbitrary one, but follows the example of Jesus in His absolute obedience to the Father even to the abandonment by the world and into his death. Jesus' presence in His time was public and filled with the Holy Spirit, thereby bringing the good news of the Kingdom with its demonstration through miracles (Lk. 7:22) and turning upside down the existent way of belief. Jesus rebutted the Pharisees' dogmatic view of the righteous living before God that rejects the invitation of the "unlikely persons" to the table of fellowship as not being in line with the heart of God.⁸²⁸ It implies that, when it

⁸²⁴ *CTCV*, 59.

⁸²⁵ Kent Brower, *Holiness in the Gospels*, 79.

⁸²⁶ The meaningfulness of "presence" cannot be cut off from the calling for the essential devotedness of the Church to God, which is the fundamental dimension of following the footsteps of Christ. In this connection, Marshall's explanation is insightful that the description of Jesus as "the Holy One" (ὁσιος (ὁσίων)) in Acts 2:27, 13:35 are 'expressive of an attitude of piety, the trust in God that is expressed in the offering of prayer to him, so that "devout" might be a better English rendering (I. Howard Marshall, "Holiness in the Book of Acts", in *Holiness and Ecclesiology in the New Testament*, ed. by Kent Brower and Andy Johnston (Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge, UK: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2007), 115-116.)'.

⁸²⁷ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 250-251.

⁸²⁸ It is Thompson who employs the term "unlikely persons" in his explanation of the concept of holiness in the Gospel of Luke in the dynamic of the table fellowship of Jesus with the Pharisees and those whom the norm of society would designate "sinners" or "outcasts". Thompson draws the distinction between Jesus and the Pharisees that the latter 'required repentance *before* inclusion within the community', whereas the former 'ate with sinners so that they might repent (Richard P. Thompson, "Gathered at the Table: Holiness and Ecclesiology in the Gospel of Luke", in *Holiness and Ecclesiology in the New Testament*, ed. by Kent Brower and Andy Johnston (Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge, UK: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2007), 81-84, 90-93.)'. See also, Kent E. Brower, "The Holy One

comes to discipleship, the believers are not the ones who are self-righteous, but those who consider themselves as the "unlikely persons" to be saved (Cf. Mk. 2:17). Against this backdrop, the Church's presence, therefore, is the one of faith and obedience. It is not an ideological correctness that brings the meaningful presence and proclamation of the Church together, but the life of the Church as disciples in directedness to the corporate following of Christ in the Spirit.

5.2. "One and Holy" for the Reformed Ecclesiology in Korea

5.2.1. On the Unity of the Church

The concurrence between the truth and the oneness of the Church must address the teleology of ecclesiological discourse on visible unity from the Reformed perspective. The truth and the oneness in concurrence entails concreteness and correlativity, meaning that they are, in correlation with the faith of the Church, of "visible", "public" and "witnessing" character, e.g. *homologia* as the essential characteristic of the confession of the Church. The confessing faith is directed towards Jesus Christ, and the truth is coexistent with "the way" and "the life (Jn. 14:6)" and correlated with the righteous living (1 Jn. 1:6, 2:4).⁸²⁹ For this reason, it needs to be maintained regarding the Reformed ecclesiology that, in its "commitment" and "directedness" to Jesus Christ and the Scripture,⁸³⁰ the neutralisation and abstraction of the truth without an eye on Jesus Christ never suffice. It is because this biblical portrayal of the concrete oneness of the Church in concurrence with the truth is hardly conveyed in such approach. Insofar as the neutralised abstraction of the truth is taken for granted as *a priori* in the way of objectivism, the rigorous stance of conservatism and subsequent theological justification for self-isolation would be seen as an agreeable pathway to take. However, "self-isolation" combined with this peculiar form of exclusive truth claim is exposed to the danger of stimulating and perpetuating separatist ecclesiologies.⁸³¹ At the same time, as observable in Ryu's thought, to treat the "truth" question as a mere "power" struggle of the Church for its "possession" cannot be accepted as biblical discourse. Such approach simply undermines the concurrent nature of truth and the oneness of the Church by isolating the latter from the former via subjectivistic relativism.⁸³² The real and true authority—or power—over the Church is nothing other than the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God.⁸³³

In this connection, the inter-denominational relation is another area that speaks volumes to the Reformed churches especially with respect to the ecumenical dialogue with other Christian traditions. Over against both stringency and indifferentism, the concurrent perspective on truth and oneness calls for the renewed understanding of inter-denominational relations and

and His Disciples: Holiness and Ecclesiology in Mark", in *Holiness and Ecclesiology in the New Testament*, ed. by Kent Brower and Andy Johnston (Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge, UK: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2007), 72.

⁸²⁹ Calvin also seems to put forward the motif of the common faith in directedness to Christ in relation to the unity of the Church: 'Nobis vero quod ex Paulo citavimus tenendum est, ecclesiam non aliter aedificari quam externa praedicatione, nec alio vinculo inter se retineri sanctos, nisi dum uno consensu discendo et proficiendo ordinem ecclesiae a Deo praescriptum colunt. In hunc praecipue finem, ut dixi, iussi sunt olim fideles sub Lege confluere ad sanctuarium: quia dum Moses de habitaculo Dei loquitur, simul locum nominis Dei appellat, ubi Deus memoriam nominis sui posuit (Exod. 20:24.)...Atque hic est felix ille occursus in unitatem fidei, dum a summo usque ad infimum omnes ad caput aspirant (Calvin, *Institutio*, IV.1.5.)'.

⁸³⁰ Cf. Eddy Van der Borgh, "Reformed Ecclesiology", 189.

⁸³¹ Cf. Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 663-665.

⁸³² Ryu, *Post-modern World & Church*, 13.

⁸³³ Berkouwer's analysis and critique on the new Protestantism in his time circles round the question of the faith in the gospel of the cross and the resurrection of Jesus Christ—the reconciliation with God (Cf. G. C. Berkouwer, *Op de Tweesprong* (Wageningen: Zomer en Keunings, 1952), 220-222.).

dialogues that uphold and are consistently informed by the gospel of salvation.⁸³⁴ The dialogue and discussion between the churches should not be simply tossed away as mere striving for pre-programmed uniformity, since the goal of the manifestation of unity is not an agenda in itself, but stands together with the confession of one Lord and one gospel. Bearing the concrete fruit of unity is another side of demonstrating one faith in the Lord, thereby encompassing the centrality of the gospel in the interdenominational relations. It suggests at the same time that the orientation of the unity in the interdenominational relations is to reject stringent uniformity in the maximisation of the search for the common understanding of the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is because uniformity in all its rigour, along with its rather universalising slant, erases the adequate consideration of legitimate pluriformity/diversity. Legitimate pluriformity/diversity, as explained earlier, is intended to serve fellowship in truth, inasmuch as the concurrence is premised between the continuity and the context-sensitiveness of the Church via the work of the Holy Spirit. It is the denunciation of subjection to the slogans of militant conservatism or dogmatic indifferentism, which, considering their "way" of approach to the Church, would end up perpetuating the division of the churches. In the same vein with this understanding, the required practice of dialogue with other traditions would be, first and foremost, the attitude of "careful" listening. It is not by dint of a blind belief that such dialogue takes place on the neutral and sinless ground and "always" leads to the truth, but because the practice of self-criticism and deeper listening to other voices might occur on the basis of the authority of the Scripture. It is a "pursuit" of the manifestation of the concurrence of the truth and the oneness of the Church, which calls for a realistic attitude that involves struggles—journeying on the "gritty path" while being covered with "dirt"—pertaining to the search for "concrete and visible" unity in Christ so that "the world may believe (Jn. 17:21)".

Moreover, together with this concurrent perspective, *CTCV*'s formulation of the unity as the communion of local churches needs to be taken into account in the Reformed ecclesiology in Korean context. The reason is that this concept does not necessarily lead to bureaucratic formalism while possessing the potential for ecclesiologically challenging the individualistic nature of the Christian communities without ignoring the significance of the local perspective.⁸³⁵ The church-individualism together with the strong in-group loyalty and clericalism has been roundly criticised by many theologians.⁸³⁶ The local churches in Korea have developed individually their own methods, policy and structure for ministry, no matter which denominations they are affiliated with, savouring the ecclesial and socio-cultural context of the late twentieth century in Korea.⁸³⁷ Also, as Kim points out, alongside the mushrooming of denominations in the late twentieth century, the empowerment of congregations in terms of wealth, numbers and influence in the denominations even caused

⁸³⁴ Van der Borght underlines that the matter of "truth" has been the decisive element that has prevented the Reformed churches from 'the commitment to the unity of the churches'. He rightly highlights the need for 'serious debate about matters of doctrine and church structures' for the Reformed churches from an ecumenical perspective (Eddy Van der Borght, "Reformed Ecclesiology", 189.).

⁸³⁵ Here, "local" signifies essentially the 'congregation of believers' as understood by the Reformed perspective (*NPC*, 67-Box. See also, Eddy Van der Borght, "Reformed Ecclesiology", 189.).

⁸³⁶ Cf. Timothy S. Lee, *Born Again: Evangelicalism in Korea*, 128. The term "church-individualism" refers to 'an approach or policy' that promotes the individualism for the congregations in dealing with the ministry, finance, mission, human resources and so on (Ref. G.-S. Han et al, "Serving Two Masters", 341.). A commonly cited symptom is the expansion-oriented policy of the churches in the late-twentieth century, which has been subject to critical voices (Timothy S. Lee, "Beleaguered Success", 342-343. See also, Sebastian C. H. Kim and Kirsteen Kim, *A History of Korean Christianity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 280-282.). Oak associates the expansion-oriented policy with the self-centredness of churches and the want of their social accountability (Sung-deuk Oak, "Protestantism Comes East: The Case of Korea", 249-250.).

⁸³⁷ Young-Jae Kim, *The History of the Korean Church*, 418, 420-421.

serious problems in executing the disciplinary process on a denominational level.⁸³⁸ Even granted that the differences of ministries and points of emphasis in individual churches can be—at least partly—interpreted as their mission-oriented endeavours to reach out to the people of the present, the real scandalous problem remains: the lack of materialisation of the "fellowship" of the churches. It is believed that, in this context, the appreciation of the concept of "the communion of local churches" might be helpful, only insofar as it is filled with the "materials" that promote the authentic *koinonia*. The concept "*koinonia*" in isolation is without any legitimate substance. Underpinned by the common faith and baptism that purport and represent the reality of *koinonia* of the churches, *koinonia* expressed especially with the participation in the Lord's Supper—at least within the Reformed family—suggests the rich indicative and imperative of fellowship in Christ where any kind of self-centred church-individualism cannot be taken for granted.⁸³⁹ The Nairobi report's emphasis on the personal and organic nature of *koinonia* in conciliar settings is set in the right direction, since it resists mere bureaucratic mechanism as well as congregational/ecclesial isolationism.⁸⁴⁰ Indifferent attitudes towards the serious scandal of the deprivation of deep inter-congregational fellowship in Christ—either by way of pointing to the invisible unity with the spirit of dogmatic rigorism or aggravating division via downplaying the baptismal, eucharistic and confessional unity—blatantly compromises this gift and calling of the communion in Christ. The want of the thesis and manifestation of *koinonia* is bound to affect not only the ecclesiological discourse in every aspect, but also all the related fields of ecclesial practice, e.g. mission, evangelism and public witness.

On the basis of the solid grip on the "fellowship" (*koinonia*) in Jesus Christ, it needs be constantly reminded that the conciliar/alliance bodies are called to denounce and fight against the spirit and materialisation of the self-centred church-individualism. It is because the testing of the gospel does not concern itself with orthodoxy only, but also with the life of the Church in words and deeds.⁸⁴¹ The correlative outlook on the Church calls for authoritative actions from the conciliar/alliance level when the doctrinal, spiritual or ethical deviation from the biblical outlook occurs on the congregational level and when any advice from the churches or the group of theologians is simply ignored and simply subjected to rebuttal. The conciliar action with the legitimate apostolic doctrines has the motivation of continuing the first

⁸³⁸ He also correctly says that this issue also had to do with the bigness-syndrome of Korean churches (Young-Jae Kim, *The History of the Korean Church*, 418-419.).

⁸³⁹ *CTCV*, 11, 47. The sense of deep togetherness is embedded in the concept "*koinonia*". A biblical investigation on the term confirmed that '*koinonia* is an early and important aspect of the church and its unity, in faith, witness and life, including baptism and Lord's Supper (John Reumann, "Koinonia in Scripture: Survey of Biblical Texts", in *On the Way to Fuller Koinonia: Official Report of the Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order*, ed. by Thomas F. Best and Günther Gassmann (Geneva: WCC, 1994), 51.), 62.)'. The connotation "sharing" was affirmed in a sense that 'believers share in the results of Christ's death (1 Cor. 10:16) as they all share in one bread and are one body, because they are "in Christ" through baptism (John Reumann, "Koinonia in Scripture: Survey of Biblical Texts", 62.)'. Participation was correlated with the togetherness of the life of believers due to their common participation 'in the gospel, Christ and Spirit (Reumann, "Koinonia in Scripture", 62.)'. Acting together was also noticed in relation to 'solidarity in suffering (Phil. 4:14, 3:10, 1 Pet. 4:13, 5:1)' and 'the sharing of money and self for the needy (Gal. 6:6; Rom. 15:27; Phil. 4:15; 2 Cor. 8-9, esp. 8:5; Acts 2:42-47.) (Reumann, "Koinonia in Scripture", 61.)'. The basic meaning of fellowship in *koinonia* was also announced—despite the acknowledgement that 'no New Testament passage speaks about *koinonia* of Father, Son and Spirit with one another'—in terms of the churches' vertical fellowship with the Trinity (1 Cor. 1:9, 2 Cor. 13:14, 1 John 1:3) (Reumann, "Koinonia in Scripture", 61.). *Koinonia* as an ecclesiological term, if rightly understood in light of the Scripture, seems to have the capacity to elucidate the essential nature of the Church in togetherness in Christ and the Spirit.

⁸⁴⁰ Cf. 'What Unity Requires', *The Nairobi Report*, 32.

⁸⁴¹ The understanding of conciliar fellowship in line with organicity and the 'committed personal fellowship in Christ', as Haar states, is of importance (Miriam Haar, "The Struggle for an Organic, Conciliar and Diverse Church", 58.). It should be simultaneously maintained that this goal could be grasped only when the scope of the mutual "recognition" of the churches applies to their beliefs and practices as a whole. It is due to the very depth of the meaning of "fellowship" in Christ, which cannot be identified with mere tolerance.

conciliar example of the apostles in Acts 15. The argumentation for the abolishment of all religious authority structures or dogmatic standards, while being "ideally" able to completely eradicate any possibility of the abuse of ecclesiastical power, fails to look at the other important dimensions of the conciliar action than the aspect of authority and power.⁸⁴² It was not suppression, but the very demonstration of the work of the Holy Spirit in Paul and Barnabas' ministry together with the acceptance of the authority of the prophet (Amos 9:11-12) that became the decisive elements of the vindication of Peter's motion against the mandatory circumcision of the Gentile believers (Acts 15:5-18). It surely indicates that the conciliar decision on doctrines is not supposed to be reliant on mere philosophical plausibility of abstracted concepts, but "must" count on the authority of the Scripture as well as the concrete demonstration of the work of the Holy Spirit. Their full acceptance would affirm the characteristic of the Christian faith and practices that embraces both "beyond" and "within"—the Spirit's supernatural action and revelation and the testimony by the person of faith.⁸⁴³

In this vein, the conciliar/alliance bodies need to find a way to involve the local church leaders from the member denominations in discussions and decision-making processes as it concerns doctrinal/disciplinary issues, public witness and mission. The involvement of local churches will be able not only to have collective voice and action on those matters, but also to encourage more careful discernment by means of testing different voices "together" on the basis of the Scripture. The danger of bureaucratising such bodies is ostensibly breathing alive and this threat cannot be silenced by mere abstracted affirmation of orthodoxy by appealing to catholicity and apostolicity. Such resolution might help induce a stronger sense of stability and continuity within the community, but by making such declaration an end in itself, the holistic nature of the confession of faith could be seriously undermined. Faith involves the whole person 'in both mind and emotion' where shared beliefs, values and solidarity are entailed: "For with the heart one believes...and with the mouth one confesses...(Rom. 10:10) [ESV]".⁸⁴⁴ This line of conservatism in the matter of doctrines, public witness and mission is exposed to the danger of being a tool of suppression on dissenting voices—as intimated by Ryu—and to the failure in the task of searching together for adequate answers to newly emerging doctrinal questions, missional concerns and matters in public sphere.⁸⁴⁵ Any sort of one-sidedness in rejection of ecclesiastical bodies and authority and the conservative suppression of other voices by means of authority trigger a (partial) relativisation of the concurrent outlook on the truth and the oneness of the Church in gift and calling, thereby losing the depth and profundity of fellowship in unity and holiness.

The second reason would be found in the substantial amelioration of theological learning for the pastors, elders and even many interested lay people nowadays, which strongly enunciates the increase of the number of theologically and spiritually qualified individuals for participation in important decision-making. It is interrelated to the prevalent influence of an ever-increasing technological connectivity,⁸⁴⁶ which makes the plenteous amounts of things in

⁸⁴² Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 178-180.

⁸⁴³ In this sense, Ryu's emphasis on the Holy Spirit and the subjectivity of Christian faith makes an important point against dead orthodoxy or traditionalism (Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 84-85).

⁸⁴⁴ Matthew A. Elliott, *Faithful Feelings: Rethinking Emotion in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006), 131-133. Overcoming the non-cognitive view that sees emotions as irrational or merely spontaneous, Elliott advocates the cognitive approach to emotions in the New Testament: 'Emotions tell us the truth about what we believe and what we value. When the New Testament commands emotion it is exhorting the believers to have the values and beliefs out of which godly emotions flow... In commanding the emotion, the writer puts their finger on the true indicator of *whether* these beliefs and values are *genuinely* held by the believer (Matthew A. Elliott, *Faithful Feelings: Rethinking Emotion in the New Testament*, 143-144.)'. He refers to the examples of command such as "joy in trials", "loving one's enemy", and not "hating one's brother" in which the linkage between the commanded emotions and 'the cognitive understanding' of the truths that generate them is discerned (Elliott, *Faithful Feelings*, 143.).

⁸⁴⁵ Ryu, *Eschatological Theology and Church*, 170-175.

⁸⁴⁶ Cf. Klaus Schwab, *The Fourth Industrial Revolution* (Cologne/Geneva: World Economic Forum, 2016), 88-89.

theological learning and spiritual growth available. This contextual shift asserts that, on the same level as the further learning and maturity, the responsibility of believers for the Church must be expressed with more weightiness and earnestness. It does not connote an advocacy for the abolishment of the authorities, but contends that it is not only the ecclesiastical bodies that accept the responsibility for the believers, but also the latter must hold the former accountable by means of encouragement, advice, criticism and common action. In all this, the full affirmation of the centrality of the scope of the gospel together with the normativity of the Scripture must maintain the motif of the "fellowship" in Christ as the collective calling of the Church. In all this, the adequate recognition of the gift and calling of ecclesial order should be maintained in the midst of dynamic and responsible interaction between the synodal/conciliar and local bodies.

In sum, the unity of the Church, as gift and calling, requires to be understood in the sense of striving for the genuine manifestation of the fellowship (*koinonia*) in Christ in accords with the newness of its life in the Spirit. It presupposes the concrete and correlative approach to the Church over against resting in the formal abstraction of the pure invisible Church or in ecclesiological subjectivism that relativises the normativity of the gospel and the Scripture.⁸⁴⁷ The conundrum of the dividedness of the churches is a real phenomenon and calls for not only effort on an organisational level, but also—and more importantly—thoroughgoing ecclesiological treatment that would not shut down the outcry of division. The outlook on the concurrence between the truth and the oneness of the Church sets the gospel of Jesus Christ as the real centre of Christian unity, which would be able to entail the true sense of "being one in Christ" rather than the suspicion of artificial and confessional reductionism. Any effort to respond to the calling for unity, e.g. by means of conciliar/alliance bodies, is to be reminded of the indicative and imperative of Christian unity where the concurrence of truth and unity is manifested and the faith of believers is involved in correlation with the revelation of the Scripture. In this way, under the light of the gift and calling of unity, the whole life of the Church on the local, regional and universal level is tested as it moves forward in history with new challenges and contexts. The aspect of "moving forward" here is deemed fundamentally constitutive to the life of the Church in the teleology of the gospel that looks out to the world with the salvific grace of God in Christ. It is the reason why any ecclesiology that does not "ecclesiologically" take the missional reality of the Church into account—either by way of the formal separation between the nature and mission of the Church or the overemphasis on the former over the latter—cannot be accepted. In this portrayal of the unity of the Church, the sense of "grit and dirt" is rightly evoked as a reference to the concrete, multifaceted and challenging task of the Church "here and now",⁸⁴⁸ and any fossilised or relativistic outlook on ecclesiology would not be able to cope with this.

5.2.2. On the Holiness of the Church

The concrete and correlative way of approach to the holiness of the Church in Berkouwer's account needs to be underlined for its sheer ecclesiological significance for the life of the Church. This is primarily because of its emphasis on the newness of the Church in the Spirit as well as its acceptance of room for the sharp and thorough "appeal" of the gospel to the Church on the concrete level. The correlative approach to *fascinans* is significant as it puts the Church in the dynamic reality of *coram Deo* under the eschatological reality of salvation in Jesus Christ. It is set against placing the Church in the static and unchangeable realm of grace via either formal distinction between the true believers that belong to the invisible Church and

⁸⁴⁷ It is seen in Ryu's formal distinction between God and the Scripture as well as his rejection of the Christocentric nature of the gospel that entails the loss of the spine of ecclesiology in direction towards experiential subjectivism with an emphasis on the Spirit (Ryu, *Post-modern World & Church*, 73-75. 121-122.).

⁸⁴⁸ Choi is the one who takes the reality of struggle of the Church seriously, and also rightly notes that it is possible owing to the power that 'comes from the promise of God (Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 94.)'.

the rest that "only" belong to the visible Church, not to mention blurring the distinct identity of the Church in Christ and the Spirit.⁸⁴⁹ Another important aspect is that the newness of the life of the Church in the Spirit addresses its corporate reality—rather than having an individualistic focus—on the current journey of faith "together". It connotes setting the Church constantly before the light and testing of the gospel "here and now".

To investigate further, drawing formal distinction between the invisible and visible Church in the conservative Reformed ecclesiology construes the "factuality" of the given attribute of the holiness of the Church that concerns the "true" believers in Christ.⁸⁵⁰ The very formality of distinction of two groups within the Church diviates from the correlative calling of the Church to holiness on the basis of the newness of its life through Christ's work of salvation and the presence of the Holy Spirit. Due to its very formality, this distinction is also inevitably of abstract nature, which is not facilitative to having an outlook on the Church as the concrete reality on the corporate journey of faith, which is accompanied by the corporate undergoing of the "grit and dirt" of struggles and the "tears and joy" of failures and signs of hope in the light of the promise and testing of the gospel.⁸⁵¹ It means that the imperative to holiness is directed at the Church as one reality, not two, and the very "conundrum" of sin in the Church is addressed by this appeal for corporate restoration in view of the sovereign verdict of God. When it is heard and listened to, the confession of guilt is evoked together with longing for the corporate renewal precisely because of the Church's deep understanding of His incredible faithfulness and mercy, as was in the context of the renewal of the covenant in Nehemiah: "...you have been righteous in all that has come upon us, for you have dealt faithfully and we have acted wickedly (Neh. 9:33) [ESV]". It is just as Paul states in Rom. 3:3 regarding the unquestionability of the faithfulness of God (την πιστιν του θεου) in the reality of 'the "unfaithfulness" of God's people'.⁸⁵² Also, as Reese explicates, in the Book of Jude where an admonition was given to the believers to shun from the infective influence of libertine doctrines (Jude v.23, 2 Pet. 3:11, 17), a request is not made for the formal separation between "the beloved" and "the ungodly". Instead, 'the ungodly are offered a route back into the called out community of the beloved via the same instructions that are given to the beloved themselves'.⁸⁵³ It is the concrete and corporate calling that signifies that God has sanctified the Church through the Son and the Spirit according to the freedom of His will, which intensifies the meaningfulness of *credo ecclesiam*. This confession cannot embrace the reduction of the imperative of holiness for the Church via ontological abstraction, but puts its life and witness under the imperative to holiness "according to the Word of God" (Belgic Confession, Art. 28.).

This is also the reason why the lack of appreciation for the reality of struggle of the Church in a subjectivistic approach cannot be considered plausible. It does not take seriously the

⁸⁴⁹ Cf. Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 171-174. See also, Ryu, *The Post-modern World & Church*, 13.

⁸⁵⁰ Cf. Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 44-48. See also, Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 122-125. Indeed, Choi exhibits more nuances than Cho by the use of terminology "dimension" when he depicts the invisible and visible aspect of the Church. In this sense, Choi follows Calvin's example more closely (Cf. Calvin, *Institutio*, IV, 1.7-8.).

⁸⁵¹ Over against the separatist standpoint, Calvin evidently sets forth the idea that the imperative of the Church for concrete striving for holiness comes together with the covenantal reality of the forgiveness of sins by the merciful God: '...quia toto studio ad sanctimoniam et solidam puritatem aspirant, mundities illis, quam nondum plene consequuti sunt, Dei benigntate tribuitur...misericordiam suam Domicus non promisit nisi in sanctorum communione. Est ergo primus nobis in ecclesiam ac regnum Dei ingressus, peccatorum remissio: sine qua nihil est nobis cum Deo foederis aut coniunctionis...Irritam autem et delusoriam fore Domini misericordiam, si semel duntaxat obtingeret, unusquisque piorum sibi testis est: quia nemo non sibi conscius est per totam vitam multarum infirmitatum, quae Dei misericordia indigent (Calvin, *Institutio*, IV.1.17, 20-21. See also, Calvin, *Institutio*, IV.1.23-29.)'.

⁸⁵² Gordon D. Fee, *Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God*, 121.

⁸⁵³ Ruth Anne Reese, "Holiness and Ecclesiology in Jude and 2 Peter", in *Holiness and Ecclesiology in the New Testament*, ed. by Kent Brower and Andy Johnston (Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge, UK: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2007), 329-330.

indicative and imperative of holiness in association with the *Vorverständnis* of the light of purity. It is due to the lack of insight in the gift of and calling for the purity of the Church. Through this distinction, the Church is distinguished from the world, meaning that the distinction itself in no way derives from the self-righteousness of the Church, but from the holiness of God's gift and calling.⁸⁵⁴ The obscuration of this dimension of the newness of the Church in the Holy Spirit does not fully embrace its distinct mandate to obey "the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness (1 Tim. 6:3) [ESV]".⁸⁵⁵ The reality of the struggle of the Church with "heretical", "unsound" and "ungodly" teachings and its striving for holding on to the true faith, which stands together with the sound doctrine of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the context of answering real questions concerning the true or false Christ/teachers/prophets (Mt. 24:24, 1 Tim. 1:3-4, 1 Jn. 2:19-25), is out of sight here.⁸⁵⁶ The eschatological reality of the Church in the Spirit involves perseverance in and contention for the sound teaching of the gospel of salvation and the holy and disciplined living in longing anticipation for the return of Jesus Christ (1 Tim. 6:11-16, Belgic Confession Art. 37.).⁸⁵⁷

The practice of discipline in the Korean context is one of the distinct efforts that the Church makes in order to collectively maintain the pure doctrines and living. The noticeable feature of this exercise in the Reformed churches in Korea is that doctrinal elements are the most prominent issues that are addressed so as to determine dangerous/heretical teachings. This phenomenon seems to coincide with the undeniable functionality of its practice due to the reality of the actual presence of religious sects with pseudo-Christian heretical belief systems that try to evangelise not only non-believers, but also believers, such as the Unification Church, New Heaven and New Earth Church, World Mission Society Church of God, and so forth.⁸⁵⁸ However, the very emphasis on doctrinal elements in practice also raises an alarming question with respect to the probability of the misuse or even abuse of the discipline, which might condemn those who "actually" believe in Christ and belong to His body. The probability of this danger is not unrelated to the rigidity of dogmatic intolerances especially when this stance represents the "majority". The first problematic aspect of this approach is the possibility that the set of dogmas with extra-biblical influences and sources combined with a dogmatic fixation leaves its own "plus" or "minus" elements to the truth of the gospel unchallenged. The disciplining, then, becomes a process where the absolute authority of the extensive belief system draws thoroughly rationalistic and punctilious judgment on voices that echo outside its confinement. For sure, there is an obvious advantage in this approach: the clear presence of normativity and the comparative clarity of the thought process. This positive facet cannot be neglected, especially if there is the actual presence of powerful cultic groups with "false christs" and "false prophets" right next to the Church with zealous enthusiasm for evangelism. And yet, the functionality does not vindicate the entailed problems of illegitimately condemning certain voices due to the extensive and scrupulous theological screening or not paying serious attention to the principle "*De intimis non judicat ecclesia*" in practice.⁸⁵⁹ Unjustified disciplinary procedures will bear the fruits of further

⁸⁵⁴ Cf. Cho, *Ecclesiology*, 659-663.

⁸⁵⁵ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 131-132. The motif of "cleanness" in the religious-ethical terms as the meaning of holiness is clearly present in Calvin's account (Calvin, *Institutio*, IV.1.17-18.).

⁸⁵⁶ Cf. G. E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 659-662.

⁸⁵⁷ The cited verses were directed to Timothy who is called to persevere in his Christian life as well as in his ministry (Cf. Gordon D. Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1988), 149-152.), but it seems that such instruction on perseverance is not confined only to those who are in the ordained ministry, but applies to all believers (Cf. Rom. 16:17-18, 2 Pet. 1:5-7).

⁸⁵⁸ Cf. The General Assembly of Presbyterian Church in Korea, (*Assortment*) *Research Report on Heresies-Pseudo-Christian Religions* [(종합) 이단사이비 연구보고집: 제 1-95 회 총회] (Seoul: Korea Presbyterian Publishing House, 2011).

⁸⁵⁹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 189-190, 192-193.

division and unholiness by instigating mutual dissension, distrust and hatred between the disciplining and the disciplined, mainly in virtue of the deep sense of injustice and untrustworthiness of the Church. The fruits speak volumes not only to believers, but also to the public, and, whenever *skandala* other than 'the *skandalon* of the gospel' dominate the Christian discourses including discipline, the suspicion—or even conviction—of the incredulity of the Church ensues. Furthermore, whenever this consequence is not directly followed by the Church's repentance and renewal because of the lack of theological self-criticism,⁸⁶⁰ a more grievous danger is anticipated thereafter, which is the Church's continuous exemption of itself—and the discipliner him/herself—from disciplinary examination accompanied by the absence of fear and trembling before Christ to whom God gave the judgment seat and every person is subject (Rom 14:10-12, 2 Cor. 5:10). The way in which the practice of discipline is performed reflects whether the life of the Church as the body of Christ is truly brought under the authority of God's Word with the objective of duly honouring the Head.⁸⁶¹ In this manner, the very critical testing of the practice of discipline is the reality that whether one truly believes in Jesus Christ and lives accordingly will be the decisive measurement of judgment (Jn. 10:26, 16:9), which 'will begin with the house of God (1 Pet. 4:17)'.⁸⁶²

Nonetheless, the attitude of relativistic tolerance is not an option, as it makes it impossible to tackle the deformation or distortion of the truth of the gospel in the life of the Church. As Berkouwer implicates, the scope of discipline is called to look into not only the verbal conformity with the set of belief, but, more importantly, the life as a whole in religious-ethical dimension in accordance with the confessional standard in the Reformed tradition, which is normally more strictly applied to the church leaders than the congregational members.⁸⁶³ The negligence of discipline in this respect increasingly blurs the standard of faith of the Church from the level of the session, presbytery, synod or general assembly. The danger is a gradual transformation of the Church from being 'a proclaimer of good news' into 'a school of philosophy'.⁸⁶⁴ Tolerance surely has the benefit of not making rash and unjustified verdict on individuals, and thereby the abuse of discipline by the ecclesial authority via punctilious and insensitive screening for verbal conformity with dogmatic formula can be prevented as well.⁸⁶⁵ However, unlimited, boundless and groundless tolerance will bear the fruit that digresses more and more from following the calling of holy living and witness: "...God chose

⁸⁶⁰ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 150-151, *De Kerk I*, 186-188.

⁸⁶¹ Cf. Calvin, *Institutio*, IV.12.5.

⁸⁶² Berkouwer, *The Return of Christ*, 418, *De Wederkomst van Christus II*, 229. The same line of thought is found in Irenaeus. He warns that, even though the presbyters must be held in high regard in the Church proportionate to the 'gift of the truth (Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against the Heresies*, 4.26.2.)', they become the subjects whom he warns of God's righteous judgment according to measurement of their status (Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against the Heresies* 4.26.3.)

⁸⁶³ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 211-212. Ridderbos points out that the boundary for discipline 'has its standard not only with respect to the moral life but also with respect to the doctrine received in the Church in what has been handed over to it and its leaders as the apostolic *paradosis* (2 Thess. 3:6, 14; 1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:14; Tit. 3:10; cf. 1 Tim. 4:7) (Herman Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*, 472.)'. Ridderbos' observation is focussed on the Pauline thinking in the New Testament, but it cannot be argued that, due to the situational differences, Paul's advice is now obsolete and irrelevant to the contemporary context. A sound theological analysis of context will be able to provide the reason for the necessity of the further interpretation of the existent dogmatic expressions, e.g. the apostolic succession and empowerment in the time of the Reformation. However, this necessity does not change the biblical motive of discipline, but, as a contrast, rather offers an opportunity to reinvestigate the current practice in light of the Scripture.

⁸⁶⁴ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 217. The Christian faith cannot be construed without the real and active relationship with God in the Holy Spirit, and, for this reason, it must be underscored that it is "bound" to be practiced in words and deeds insofar as it is not detached from the essential relation with the gospel and thus gets abstracted or philosophised as if it is a mere 'web of interconnected ideas (Cornelis van der Kooi and Gijsbert van der Brink, *Christian Dogmatics*, 581.)'.

⁸⁶⁵ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 123-124.

you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth...So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter (2 Thess. 2:13, 15) [ESV]".⁸⁶⁶

In fact, the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the standard of living that stems from the life in the Holy Spirit should form the standard as the *locus* of the single intolerance in every aspect of discernment in order to prevent the deformation and obscuration of not only the message of salvation, but the outlook on the entire living as the people of God, the body of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit.⁸⁶⁷ The embrace and employment of the confessional standard must mirror this heart of the Christian faith, instead of weaponising the formula as a fierce and merciless interrogator of verbal conformity. New scientific findings and further theological discussions would inquire if the further interpretation of certain aspects of confession are necessitated, and these scrutinies and investigations must be allowed enough room for thorough and patient study and research.⁸⁶⁸ Instead of making and perpetuating a dichotomy between scientific findings and the Christian worldview, an inquiry is required on how the Christian gospel of Jesus Christ that confesses the creation, sovereignty, faithfulness, redemption, providence and completion of all things by the Triune God engages with and gives revelatory meaning to the findings in natural sciences by being an active and critical interpreter.⁸⁶⁹ In the face of scientific findings, confessional standards may not shut down possible further theological discoveries through renewed reflection on the Scripture, but engage with the results of the inquiries by constantly providing the "centre" and the criteria for their theological "legitimacy".⁸⁷⁰ And yet, at the same time, the very religious and ethical character of the Christian faith as reflected in the confessional standard in harmony with the Scripture demands the faithful and thoughtful exercise of discipline. Its negligence not only undermines the imperative of "loving each other" under the command of which its practice is positioned, but also, by blurring the ground of the normativity of the Scripture and the message of the gospel, seriously undercuts the corporate calling of the Church for the consecrated living that is meant to give glory and honour to God alone in words and deeds.⁸⁷¹

⁸⁶⁶ Ridderbos notes that the subject of *ἀγίασμος* in 2 Thess. 2:13 (*ἐν ἀγιάσμῳ πνεύματος*) is the Holy Spirit and it denotes not a mere moral sense of holiness, but 'the moral condition answering to the fact of having been appropriated to the Lord' as '*sub specie electionis* and *sub specie ecclesiae* (Herman Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*, 263.)'.

⁸⁶⁷ Berkouwer, *De Kerk II*, 224. According to Calvin, the possibility of the disturbance, deformation and even digression of the doctrines and life of the Church calls for the sound use of discipline, and this practice presupposes the soteriological view on the Church that places the sinfulness of humanity and the saving gospel of Jesus Christ at the heart (Calvin, *Institutio*, IV.12.2.).

⁸⁶⁸ Berkouwer keeps away from a theology's fearful reaction to new scientific findings. One should be more interested in the *accuracy* and the *method* of science ('de *zuiverheid* en de *methode* der wetenschap') instead of taking up an antagonistic position due to the fear of scientific facts. He speaks in agreement with Bavinck: 'Wel waarschuwde hij om toch te onderscheiden tussen de *feiten* en de daaraan vaak vastgeknoopte *behouwingen*, maar hij wees er op, dat wij als "kinderen van deze tijd" elke goede gave van de Vader der lichten moesten aannemen (G. C. Berkouwer, *Op de Tweesprong*, 218.)'.

⁸⁶⁹ Van den Brink states: 'de taak van de christelijke theologie lijkt me...niet om de aftocht te blazen, maar veel meer positief te laten zien welke meerwaarde, welk surplus een christelijke duiding verleent aan het beeld van de natuurlijke werkelijkheid en haar geschiedenis zoals dat uit de hedendaagse (natuur)wetenschappen oprijst'. He also underscores the centrality of hope in Christian message: 'christelijk geloof cirkelt om een boodschap van hoop (Gijsbert van den Brink, *Tussen Conflict en Consonantie: Fundamenteeltheologische kanttekeningen bij de verhouding van geloof en wetenschap* (Amsterdam: VU University, Faculty of Theology, 2015), 21.)'.

⁸⁷⁰ Berkhof critiques a fundamentalist attitude to the Scripture that it merely justifies and supports its own confessional tradition by means of the Scripture and does not show eagerness for new findings and discoveries in light of the Scripture (Hendrikus Berkhof, *Introduction to the Study of Dogmatics*, trans. by John Vriend (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 17-20.).

⁸⁷¹ Calvin clearly has the communal perspective in mind when he speaks about discipline in that it functions as a warning for the believers to hold on to the holy living as called (Calvin, *Institutio*, IV.1.29, IV.12.5.). Reese points out the motif of "mercy" and "salvation" in Jude v. 22-23 where "the beloved" are called to reach out to and rescue the insiders who have fallen 'into doubt, danger, or sin' with mercifulness (Ruth Anne Reese, "Holiness and

The discussion on discipline so far puts forth that it must be understood as genuine Christian practice that expectedly shows forth the light of the gospel. What needs to be pitched further is the significance of the Church's calling for discipleship that rebuts one-sided adherence to orthodoxy or orthopraxy. Discipleship is the calling to holiness that, in submission to Christ, can never separate right teaching and practice. Berkouwer elaborates on the "strangeness" of division between the two, asserting that, in the deep and unique fellowship whose meaning 'is founded in *unio cum Christo*', any kind of dualism between orthodoxy and orthopraxy—namely, 'right doctrine and right practice'—is not permissible.⁸⁷² He draws attention to Paul's teaching for 'the Jews about breaking apart what is unbreakably united', in which it is made transparent that 'boasting in God, approving the law, being instructed, and wanting to be a guide to the blind, a corrector, and a teacher (Rom 2:17-20) do not remove the concrete question about one's own life, about teaching oneself (2:21)'.⁸⁷³ The understanding of the origin and identity of the Church which can only be found in the Lord in His mercy and grace, not in itself, as presented with the images such as "the body of Christ" or "the apple of the eye", does not justify self-justification in separation from the 'true fellowship in faith and love', because then 'all the depth and richness of the "images" for the Church' are lost, whereas 'only a sterile claim remains', turning into 'the object of razor-sharp, prophetic criticism'.⁸⁷⁴ Losing the grasp of the reality of the Church in the very dynamic of 'calling and commission' in the 'fellowship both with the Lord' and with others is directed to the negligence of the danger that the utmost responsibility is implicated in 'thinking and speaking about the Church as the body of Christ, as the mystery of belonging to Him—My Church (Matt. 16:18)'.⁸⁷⁵

The inseparability of orthodoxy and orthopraxy in the Church's calling to holiness addresses a critical question as to its presence and public witness in the Korean context. The Church's "belonging" to Christ and its calling to discipleship point at the religious-ethical character of its life and witness in the world, and it stems from the acceptance of the full christological and pneumatological involvement as exhibited in the life and witness of Jesus Christ in the anointing and empowerment by the Holy Spirit.⁸⁷⁶ Christological and pneumatological involvement stands against any one-sided appeal to either of them when it comes to the conception of the Church as the body of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit. The one-sidedness occurs when the full scope of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ in His absolute obedience to the Father, His affirmation of the authority of Moses and the Prophets of the Old Testament, His integrity before God and His message of the gospel of the Kingdom is dismissed, or the scope of the dynamic and empowering work and guidance of the Holy Spirit manifested in the life of Jesus is toned down.⁸⁷⁷ The materialisation of the life of discipleship that upholds both dimensions presupposes its correlation with the self-denial and faith of the Church over against the fleshly thinking. It is 'walking by means of the *Holy Spirit*', which first and foremost involves putting 'to death the former way of life (Rom. 6:1-18; 8:12-13; Col. 3:5-11)' depicted 'in Galatians 5:19-21 as "the works of the flesh," which refers to life

Ecclesiology in Jude and 2 Peter", *Holiness and Ecclesiology in the New Testament*, 326-334.). She explains: '...the salvation that they (the beloved) are to offer the ungodly is framed by mercy. Salvation in this context is clearly rescue from destruction since the beloved are instructed to snatch some from the fire associated with the judgment of God (v. 23; cf. v.7) (Ruth Anne Reese, "Holiness and Ecclesiology in Jude and 2 Peter", 332.)'.

⁸⁷² Berkouwer, *The Church*, 98, *De Kerk I*, 118-119.

⁸⁷³ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 98, *De Kerk I*, 119.

⁸⁷⁴ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 99, *De Kerk I*, 120.

⁸⁷⁵ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 99, *De Kerk I*, 120.

⁸⁷⁶ Cf. Cornelis van der Kooi, *This Incredibly Benevolent Force*, 36. See also, Richard J. Plantinga, Thomas R. Thompson and Matthew D. Lundberg, *An Introduction to Christian Theology*, 302-303.

⁸⁷⁷ Cf. Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 44-47.

before and outside Christ' as well as overcoming factionalism within the community via the empowerment by the Spirit who reproduces 'the life of Christ within and among them'.⁸⁷⁸

It means that discipleship rejects a discrepancy between "'spiritual" and "material"' as not merely an intellectual mistake, but a religious parenthesis, not comprehending the impossibility of the fracture between 'love to God and love to our neighbour'.⁸⁷⁹ The sheer depth of believers' love for God in response to God's overflowing grace and love as demonstrated in Christ corresponds to their love for neighbours in weight and profoundness.⁸⁸⁰ The concrete fellowship formed not in dualism between "spiritual" and "material" but in togetherness retains its own unique structure, in which 'the small horizon of individual life is penetrated by wondrous attention and receptiveness, by true discipleship', which 'is following Christ on His way, with His interest, His compassion, His affection, and His servanthood'.⁸⁸¹ The Church's presence and witness in its belonging to Christ, therefore, come together in discipleship that incorporates the inner and outer dimensions of its life marked by the christological and pneumatological formation.

The christologically and pneumatologically identified presence and witness of the Church mandate its faithful and dynamic response to God in the midst of the shifting arena of contextual realities. As aforementioned, Korean society is experiencing the contemporary phenomenon of the increasing level of connectivity among individuals as well as their access to materials—documents, videos, audios and so forth—by virtue of the rapid development of internet connectivity. It is not amiss to state that Christians are, overall, living in this reality, seeing that they are already having access to the Scripture, theological materials, lectures, discussions and study groups through numerous websites, social network and so forth.⁸⁸² It is even quite common to see nowadays the lay believers forming their own community groups for specific purposes, e.g. Bible study, theological learning, missional work et cetera. Various opportunities for independent theological learning and biblical studies are available to them. It signifies, positively speaking, the empowerment of lay believers, and, at the same time, a warning signal to the possible upsurge of polarisation between them and the church leadership, unless they find a feasible way together to mutually recognise and cooperate with each other for ministry and mission. Mutual indifference or factionalistic dismissal—owing to continuous mutual misrepresentation, contempt, distrust, and misunderstanding—would be

⁸⁷⁸ Gordon D. Fee, *Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God*, 109.

⁸⁷⁹ G. C. Berkouwer, *The Church*, 96, G. C. Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 116. This diagnosis by Berkouwer seems to coincide with the motif in 1 John 4:7-21 where the definite christocentred and gospel-centred knowledge of God's love is presupposed when the sentence "whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love (1 Jn. 4:8)" is spoken of (Cf. Elliott, *Faithful Feelings*, 152-153.).

⁸⁸⁰ Berkouwer goes into the Pauline epistles, Romans and 2 Corinthians, in order to substantiate the weight of concern Paul had on the material matters of contribution for the poor brethren in connection with the spiritual blessing, with the strong expression of the imperative "ought" (Berkouwer, *The Church*, 95, *De Kerk I*, 115.). This correlation illuminates 'the meaning, depth and responsibility of a new fellowship', grounded and vivified by 'the light of Christ's self-emptying - His never-ending service, concern, and mercy (Berkouwer, *The Church*, 95, *De Kerk I*, 116.)'.

⁸⁸¹ Berkouwer, *The Church*, 97-98, *De Kerk I*, 117-119. Berkouwer follows: 'Het zou uiterst triest zijn, wanneer in een reactie tegen de secularisering der liefde deze diepte van het in Christus ontsloten hart - correlaat met Gods blijvende liefde - zou worden miskend of geminimaliseerd (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 117-118.)'.

⁸⁸² To look at the shift in the accessibility to the religious materials as well as the increase in the inter-connectivity between the interested individuals, see Richard Susskind and Daniel Susskind, *The Future of Professions: How Technology Will Transform the Work of Human Experts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 61-66, 175-182. In the Korean context, the immediately noticeable instances are, aside from the online platforms that provide video sermons, lectures and written materials such as "Godpeople.com", numerous "YouTube" channels and local church websites, the social networking services that have enabled interested individuals to share ideas and information (about preachers, books, theologians and so on), debate theological subjects, and facilitate the sense of belonging and solidarity of local communities and faith-groups of work places and schools. This tendency has increased since the outbreak of COVID-19, as the demand for resources available online has dramatically increased.

one of the negative results that can only exemplify the exacerbation of the dividedness within the Church and the echoes of self-affirmation and claim for purity.

This matter poses a serious question with regards to the meaning of the calling of discipleship for the Church, particularly with a view to fellowship. As christologically and pneumatologically characterised, the incorporation of the "spiritual" and the "material" in discipleship must seek its meaning in following the footsteps of Christ in the Holy Spirit and come under the gift and calling of the unity and holiness of the Church. It connotes that the discipleship should not be understood exclusively as the calling for holiness whilst the imperative of unity is set aside, and vice versa. Both the fellowship and discipleship as gift and calling belong to one Head and Shepherd, and, in correlation to the faith of the Church, they are thereby discerned as one calling in the Holy Spirit. Thus, it should be reminded that whether this peculiar development in the ecclesial scene will lead to gradual or rapid polarisation between the ecclesial leadership and lay believers or not will be determined by the way in which the discipleship is understood and expressed in the concrete reality in accordance with *credo ecclesiam*, which embraces holiness and unity together.

The meaningful presence and public witness of the Church can be also spoken of over against any one-sided discourse in accordance with the polarised theological identities. The Church is called to submit to God and His Word in words and deeds, and this calling is its imperative "here and now". The background of socio-political divide according to partisan group identities—together with all stereotypes and stigmas on one another—should not dictate the way in which the churches in theological polarisation participate in public witness.⁸⁸³ It signifies their calling to overcome the influence of political factionalism and social divides according to regions, wealth and ideologies. The way in which partisan logic, together with the supporters' attachment to certain figures in their group should not prevent more deepened and balanced reasoning on policies instead of resorting to the stigmatisation of others.⁸⁸⁴ The problem is that as far as "how" theological discourses are formed according to denominational identities is concerned, the very theological polarisation in Korea does not seem to be able to claim a higher place than such entrenched public reality.

This state of polarisation might barricade the meaningful engagement with the concerns of the day, due to the possible dominance of an antagonising spirit that tends to engender a rather one-sided and polemical interpretation of the subject matters "over against" the others. Getting at the truth would require patient and careful listening in order to gain the truthful understanding of the issues, but a polemical spirit might affect this important process by way of immature and impatient value judgment on its opponent. The Church is called to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, and it should be combined with speaking truthfully instead of the willful misrepresentations or caricatures of complex subjects and concerns in society, which might serve the spirit of the divisive discourses out of surrounding socio-cultural, political or national identities. For example, concerning the 'Christian interpretation of culture', while holding on to the centrality of the gospel, Vanhoozer sees it as a challenge 'to seek to understand culture in ways that do not simply reflect community preferences, but disclose

⁸⁸³ Choi underscores the socio-political division of Korea in terms of regions, wealth and political orientations (Sung-soo Choi, "The Calling of the Church from the Perspective of the Gospel," in *Ecclesiology* [교회론], ed. by Ministry and Theology Editorial Department, (Seoul: Duranno Publishing, 2012), 23-24.). Political factionalism is one of the most frequently addressed topics as a typically Korean phenomenon (Cf. Young-whan Kihl, "The Legacy of Confucian Culture and South Korean Politics and Economics: An Interpretation", in *Korean Philosophy: Its Tradition and Modern Transformation*, ed. by Korean National Commission for UNESCO, (Elizabeth, NJ-Seoul: Hollym, 2004), 139-140.).

⁸⁸⁴ Cf. Seong-yi Yun, 'Psychological Root for Ideological Conflict (trans. by the author)' [이념갈등의 정신적 뿌리], *Who are Koreans?: Reading Our Identity with 38 Codes* [한국인은 누구인가: 38 가지 코드로 읽는 우리의 정체성], ed. by Moon-jo Kim (Paju: Book 21, 2013), 36-41.

truth'.⁸⁸⁵ The applicability of such challenge is not confined to the Church's engagement with its surrounding culture alone, but extended to other areas of the public life. In a polarised ecclesial context, unfortunate caricatures and misrepresentations can also be directed at the opposing perspectives, as well. Moreover, since such outcomes tend to exhibit the reality that often denominational identities coincide with their socio-political identities, the churches are exposed to the possibility of further polarisation in dividedness. They should see if their identity in Jesus Christ is truly forming and ruling the other identities, so that they would not find themselves being merely subservient to them.⁸⁸⁶

In the Church's calling to discipleship, partisan logic must be resisted "theologically" and "in practice", because it clouds the Church's "essential" belonging to Christ as the Lord.⁸⁸⁷ Following the footsteps of Christ in the Spirit—looking to Christ and being empowered by the Spirit—involves overcoming "theologically" stigmas and accusations for non-compliance with the categorised party-logic within the perpetuated ideological division. It entails not only theological self-criticism especially in regard to the current way of approach to the Church's presence and witness even if it is predicated on the previous establishments,⁸⁸⁸ but also, relatedly, transition to a more dialogical environment instead of automatic deepening of polarisation. Dialogue here is not meant to be a device for the neutralising of Christian faith in which the centrality of the gospel of Jesus Christ ends up being turned into to a set of dead formulae or given only partial significance, leading to ecumenical utopianism or pessimism.⁸⁸⁹ Instead, it is to be pursued as a distinctive Christian practice of discipleship, focussing on following the footsteps of Jesus Christ in the light of the teleology of the gospel of salvation "together (Cf. Matt. 16:14, 20:28, 26:28, 1 Jn. 2:2)". It is to find a way to uphold evangelism and public engagement without being simply defeated by mutual stigmatisation, and such effort is to be seen in concurrence with the calling for the personal-relational holiness of the Church without setting apart the pursuit of personal piety from the zeal for public action.

Together with overcoming the spirit of polarisation, the witness of the Church must have consistency, which upholds the concurrence of its public presence and witness in Jesus Christ and that of its piety and public action. If it proclaims the love, compassion and forgiveness of God in Jesus Christ, it should live and speak as such (Eph 4:32-5:2) inside and outside of the

⁸⁸⁵ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, "What Is Everyday Theology?: How and Why Christians Should Read Culture", in *Everyday Theology: How to Read Cultural Texts and Interpret Trends*, ed. by Kevin J. Vanhoozer, Charles A. Anderson and Michael J. Sleasman (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 40.

⁸⁸⁶ Cf. E. A. J. G. Van der Borgh, *Sunday Morning - The Most Segregated Hour: On Racial Reconciliation as Unfinished Business for Theology in South Africa and Beyond*, 22. By citing the North American and South African example, Pauw critically examines the tendency of the Presbyterian churches to merge their Christian identity with their national identities and thereby to become vulnerable to 'nationalist idolatry', which is one of the 'two cardinal sins of denomination' together with divisiveness (Amy Plantinga Pauw, "Presbyterianism and Denomination", in *Denomination: Assessing an Ecclesiological Category*, ed. by Paul M. Collins and Barry Ensign-George (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 139-142.).

⁸⁸⁷ Cf. Choi, *Ecclesiology*, 42.

⁸⁸⁸ Son finds the reason for the lack of socio-political engagement among the conservative churches in the theological influence of the missionaries from America. He also observes a theological affiliation of the progressive churches who were politically active in the context of the movement for democracy, have with South American Liberation Theology. He judges both theologically illegitimate, for the former makes unacceptable discrepancy between 'faith and living' where as the latter displays more affinity with a humanist ideology than uniquely the Christian perspective (Cf. Bong-ho Son, "Relevance of Sphere Sovereignty to Korean Society", in *Kuyper Reconsidered: Aspects of His Life and Work (VU Studies on Protestant History, 3)*, ed. by Cornelis van Der Kooi and J. De Bruijn (Amsterdam: VU Uitgeverij, 1999), 179-189.).

⁸⁸⁹ For instance, as Brinkman argues, the understanding of the connotation of both humility in mortification before God and others and new hope in Christ in baptism would not permit in ethical dimension the advancement of social utopianism or pessimism (Cf. Martien E. Brinkman, *A Reformed Voice in the Ecumenical Discussion* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2016), 76-79, 117-119.). Such observation is important, insofar as the churches would search for a thoroughly Christian discourse in a non-Christendom context.

ecclesial arena. This point should be emphasised even further especially if the churches truly believe that the way of love, compassion and forgiveness in Jesus Christ exhibit the core of Christian holiness. For instance, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, taking proactive measures for meetings and worship services in order to prevent the spread of the virus in the society and supporting those who are suffering in this situation with whatever means possible would come closer to the expression of care and love than becoming the medium of the spread of the virus by ignoring all of the necessary prevention measures. The churches that insist on the form of the offline worship service without such measures in this situation as an expression of their piety to God as well as opposition to the measure of the government should consider seriously the possibility that while they claim to serve God, they might become the possible channel of infection, which might cause more sufferings and deaths of their neighbours. It would be better for the churches to patiently search together for the best way to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ through words and deeds consistently, while not giving up on the service and meetings for their congregations.

5.2.3. Unity and Holiness in Concurrence

Now, in the same with the argument so far, it would be the next step to clarify how the unity and holiness of the Church can ecclesiologically come together. Berkouwer's basic ecclesiological framework has been adopted in this work, which conceives the Church as the concrete *congregatio fidelium* and *communio sanctorum* in its relatedness to Jesus Christ who is the one and only Head and Shepherd of the Church. This relational way of approach to the Church indicates the weight given to the meaningfulness of *credo ecclesiam*, which, over against an untroubled resting in theoretical abstraction or convenient relativism in ecclesiology, deeply involves the calling and responsibility of the Church to the faithful response in accord with the *nota ecclesiae*: the Word of God.⁸⁹⁰ It also connotes the motif of the testing of the Word as well as the positioning of the Church "under" the authority of the Word in the acknowledgement of the sole Headship of Jesus Christ (Belgic Confession, Art. 29.).⁸⁹¹ The motif of the testing does not stand in vacuum as if it signifies legalistic biblicism, but is preceded by the newness of the life of the Church through the Holy Spirit: *credo in Spiritum Sanctam*.⁸⁹² The precedence of the Holy Spirit transcends legalism since it is the outpouring of the Spirit that moves the people of God to keep His laws and decrees for the glory of God (Ezek. 36:25-31). Here, any hint of self-righteousness disappears. Instead, just as Ezekiel prophesied over the Israelites, the Spirit's coming engenders the people's self-loathing for their "sins and detestable practices (Ezek. 36:31, cf. Ezek. 37:23-24)" together with the full recognition of the reality of the sovereign grace of God. In this way, the testing of the Word and the Spirit underscores the newness of the life of the Church in covenantal relationship with God. The newness in the Spirit makes the perpetuation of disunity and unholiness inexcusable, since the newness is not a mere neutral formula of things that automatically come true, but testifies to the reality of the grace of God that involves the appeal to the faith of the Church.

Berkouwer's explanation of Calvin's employment of the concept "*vestigia ecclesiae*" when he critiqued Rome showcases this motif, as Calvin's criticism recognises God's faithfulness, e.g. in the case of baptism, and critiques the Roman Catholic Church as conveyed by the term "the

⁸⁹⁰ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 14-15.

⁸⁹¹ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 18.

⁸⁹² Berkouwer takes note of the precedence of *credo in Spiritum Sanctam* in relation to *credo ecclesiam catholicam* (Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 154.). However, it is significant to underscore that this precedence must be applied to all the dimensions of *credo ecclesiam* in order to grasp the full significance of the life of the Church in the Holy Spirit.

ruin".⁸⁹³ Berkouwer pinpoints the testing of the Word—whether the Word is really heard by the Church—to be the main concern for Calvin that prevents him from calling Rome the true Church.⁸⁹⁴ At this point, it is also noticeable that Calvin points at the impiety (*impietatem*) and the 'evil and deadly doctrines' (*'malis et exitialibus doctrinae'*).⁸⁹⁵ This concrete view of the Church is of significance in perceiving the correlative nature of the Church on earth in the reality of gift and calling: "eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:3) [ESV]".⁸⁹⁶ What is observed is that Calvin's concern is not doctrinal correctness alone, but the life, witness and worship of the Church before God.⁸⁹⁷ It clearly shows the sense of unrest instead of laidback pluriformity concerning the usage of *vestigia ecclesiae*. Here, the concrete outlook on the Church comes together with the testing motif, and the attention is paid not merely to dogmatic correctness, but the life of the Church as a whole. On this horizon, the Word and the Spirit become visible and, at the same time, it is also made clear that the unity or holiness of the Church is not an isolated concern, but has to do with the genuine demonstration of one Lord in the concrete words and deeds of the Church.

The newness of the life of the Church in the gift and calling of fellowship and sanctified living (Rom. 12:1) calls for the concurrent approach to unity and holiness. The newness of the Church reveals the coexistence of the oneness of the Church and the truth it confesses (Jn. 14:6) in the Holy Spirit, which comprehends the seriousness of the disruption of truth or oneness since they form a profound interconnected relationship. Moreover, the fruit of holiness and purity comes together with the fruit of unity and fellowship in the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23), whereas impurity and division belong to "the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21). This " description comes together with the statement that "those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires" as well as "if we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit (Gal. 5:24-25) [ESV]". The newness of the Church, therefore, does not separate, but brings the unity and holiness of the Church into one reality in the Spirit. In other words, just as the coexistence between truth and the oneness of the Church, the maintaining or disruption of unity signifies the maintaining or disruption of holiness and vice versa. Since the concern for unity is the concern for holiness in the fundamental ground of the newness of the Church, the legitimate ecclesiological approach is the one that is capable of bringing unity and holiness together.

Thus, moving on to the relationship between the unity and holiness of the Church, both *CTCV* and Berkouwer emphasise their interrelatedness. For Berkouwer, it is deemed illegitimate to execute a one-sided treatment of unity, catholicity, apostolicity and holiness with negligence of the other(s). He lays out the importance of the wholeness of ecclesiological outlook, while not delving into the way in which all the elements come together in light of the Scripture.⁸⁹⁸ *CTCV* provides more explanation on this subject and, therefore, deserves more attention here. Unity, catholicity, apostolicity and holiness in *CTCV* find their origins and roots in the nature of God, connoting its trinitarian origin. First of all, *NPC* and *NMC* declare that the Church's being one, holy, catholic and apostolic derives from the Church's being 'the creature of God's

⁸⁹³ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 79-81. See also, John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion II*, trans. by Ford Lewis Battles, ed. by John T. McNeill (Louisville, Kentucky: The Westminster Press, 1960), IV.2.11.

⁸⁹⁴ John Calvin, *Institutes*, IV.2.10, 12.

⁸⁹⁵ Calvin, *Institutio*, IV.2.11, 12. See also, Calvin, *Institutes*, IV.2.11, 12.

⁸⁹⁶ Ladd explicates the unity in terms of its given nature and the possibility of its disruption. His statement that the unity of the Church is 'not something to be created' is of importance and coincides with the correlative approach (Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, 592.).

⁸⁹⁷ '...malis et exitialibus doctrinis, ceu venenatis potionibus, corruerit, et propemodum enecarit, in quibus semisepultus lateat Christus, obrutum Evangelium, profligata pietas, cultus Dei fere abolitus... (Calvin, *Institutio*, IV.2.12.).

⁸⁹⁸ Berkouwer, *De Kerk I*, 26-27.

own Word and Spirit'.⁸⁹⁹ The four attributes of the Church, relatedly, reflect the divine and human reality of the Church as it puts its feet on the ground in its calling and anticipation for the eschatological hope. The term commonly used in *NPC* and *NMC* is 'The Church *in via*'.⁹⁰⁰ *NMC* explains:

'The oneness, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity...are God's gifts and...essential attributes of the Church's nature and mission...there is a continual tension in the historical life of the Church...between that which is already given and that which is not yet fully realised'.⁹⁰¹

The essentiality of the four attributes as to the nature and mission of the Church finds its basis in the fact that 'all four attributes relate both to the nature of God's own being and to the practical demands of authentic mission'.⁹⁰² The essential relatedness of the four attributes to the nature of God is highlighted again in *CTCV*.⁹⁰³

CTCV makes refinement by stressing the interrelatedness of each attribute to another within the dynamic structure of *mutual informing*.⁹⁰⁴ The tendency to emphasise one attribute while disregarding another is not vindicated, but called to correction. All the four attributes beseech the substantial notion of the transcendent nature of the church as epitomised in the report, especially in contradistinction to the human influence or the power of sin. The possibility of being closer to the genuine depiction is contingent on bringing in all four attributes in the multilateral dynamics of interrelation. For instance, the visible unity of the Church, which is derivative, does not exclude the necessity of investigation into its catholicity, apostolicity and holiness, and this does not imply, by any means, the diminishment of its own significance, since the derivativeness of the attributes construes their givenness endowed by the Triune God as well as His calling. Each attribute not only portrays the Church's reality originated from God as a given, but also portends God's calling for the Church due to its limitedness and fragility in the world, thereby substantiating the dynamicity of *gift and calling* in the ecclesial life.

CTCV's viewpoint on the interrelatedness is a valuable insight, insofar as it is desired that any one-sided articulation on unity or holiness would be avoided. And yet, unless the centrality of the gospel is granted full formative force especially as concerns the material of discourse, such interrelated approach would remain as a formal and rather neutral way of theorisation abstracted from the ground. It is the case especially if the formal primacy of the givenness of unity and holiness reduces down the nature of the outrageousness and strangeness of the Church's estrangement and sin by use of the objectivistic and deterministic language. Then, the warning against the hardening of the heart (Heb. 3:12-15) and the deviation from the way of the Spirit (1 Cor. 2-3) in continuity with the examples of the people of God in the Old Testament is no longer fully heard.⁹⁰⁵ When the Church is looked into via the gospel of salvation in the correlative way, its disunity and unholiness come into light as one ecclesial status quo in its relatedness to Christ "here and now". The interrelatedness between unity and

⁸⁹⁹ *NPC*, 12. *NMC*, 12.

⁹⁰⁰ *NPC*, 35. *NMC*, 48.

⁹⁰¹ *NMC*, 52.

⁹⁰² *NMC*, 35.

⁹⁰³ *CTCV*, 22.

⁹⁰⁴ *CTCV*, 22.

⁹⁰⁵ Calvin's comment on the profanity of Israel and Judah in the time of the prophets is insightful here: '...certe si illae ecclesiae fuerunt, sequitur ab ecclesia Dei alienos fuisse, in Israele quidem Eliam, Michacam, et similes: in Iudaea autem Iesaiam, Ieremiam, Hoseam, et reliquos eius notae, quos peius quibusvis incircumcisis oderant et exsecrabantur sui saeculi prophetae, sacerdotes, et populus. Si illae ecclesiae, ergo ecclesia non columna veritatis, sed firmamentum mendacii: non tabernaculum Dei viventis, sed idolorum receptaculum (Calvin, *Institutio*, IV.2.10.)'.

holiness needs be understood in terms of this concurrence in order to address the Church as one reality in relation to Christ.

Unity and holiness, therefore, is to be treated in the light of their concurrence, and this suggestion is directed at a shift in the "way" of approach to ecclesiology. The concurrent approach here, as intimated above, presupposes the correlative perspective that Berkouwer pronounces. The "theonomous" correlation between Word and faith not only leads to the concrete view of the Church that is able to take the contextuality and the gift and calling of the Church seriously,⁹⁰⁶ but also firmly maintains the centrality of the gospel in ecclesiological formulation. It is as the Church is called to "visible" unity and holiness, especially in fellowship and discipleship, which incorporate its life as concrete reality. This calling of the Church is grounded in the indicative of the salvific grace of God and the newness of its life in the Spirit. The very concreteness of the calling is the reason why any clear-cut and already-perfected portrayal of the Church promulgated in a way that silences the conundrum of its estrangement and sins is to be rejected. Instead, it is made clear first and foremost that the Church is journeying in the eschatological reality of "already, but not yet", in which the "grit and dirt" of its struggles are involved, since the Church does not ignore, but faces that it is entangled with all sorts of challenges and problems that pose a threat to walking in the way of unity and holiness, e.g. fellowship (*koinonia*) and discipleship. In all this, ecclesiology is called to bring to mind the truth and promise concerning the Church as the covenantal people of God, the body of Christ and the temple of the Spirit. These trinitarian realities not only pin down the pathway where great comfort, joy and confidence of the Church in the Lord in peace, unity and godliness are observed and enjoyed, but also test, critique and challenge the religious-ethical reality of the Church in the scandalous condition and perpetuation of disunity and impurity. In this concurrent dynamic, the Church's confession of the truth of God's faithfulness and His preservation of His people against all kinds of waves and challenges from the outside and the inside finds their real meaningfulness (Rom. 8:18-39. See also, Heidelberg Catechism, Art .54 and Belgic Confession, Art. 27.).

When the Church is approached as one reality related to Christ, the concurrent approach to unity and holiness in gift and calling rejects their hierarchical formation in which one of them structurally dominates/silences another. Holiness and unity in concurrence denunciate a neutral rationalistic approach, and point at the Spiritual—denoting the character of the Spirit—and sanctified reality of the Church in Jesus Christ. The Church's calling here is that of self-denial and faith, and ecclesiology is not above this mandate. Ecclesiology is called to reflect unity and holiness while the single gospel of salvation is set as the definite centre, round which its discourse exhibits its centrifugal and centripetal character in dynamic interaction with newly emerging situations and challenges. In this approach, concern for the purity of doctrines, as exemplified in the practice of discipline, is to be simultaneously concern for keeping or restoring the unity and fellowship of the Church. The integration of orthodoxy and orthopraxy keeps away from factionalism and is directed towards the strengthening of fellowship in the love of Christ as well as the furtherance of the Church's active involvement in discipleship: following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. At the same time, the concern for unity, as shown forth in the discussion on interdenominational relations and dialogue, fully involves maintaining or recovering the pure doctrines of faith and the sanctified living in accordance with the fruits of the Holy Spirit. In this outlook, any theological justification of the complete or partial negligence of either unity or holiness is not deemed vindicated. The correlative and concurrent outlook suggests that the unity and holiness of the Church are not separate subjects to make a selective choice of, but are the indicative and imperative from God to which the Church in its existence is subjected "here and now" as it is called to respond in obedience and faith. The weight of "*credo ecclesiam*", under the covenantal mercy of God in the eschatological Spirit, intimates the abundant grace and gift of God through His Son and, therefore, makes the Church restless unless it

⁹⁰⁶ Cf. Dirk van Keulen, 'G. C. Berkouwer's Principle of Correlation: An Attempt to Comprehend', 110.

wholeheartedly responds to the calling for the concrete manifestation of unity and holiness in life and witness.

[Chapter 6: Conclusion]

6.1. Summary

The objective of the dissertation has been to search the way in which the unity and holiness of the Church could be brought together in Reformed ecclesiology in the ecclesiastical context of Korea. The weight of research has been given to the theological discussion on unity and holiness in two aspects, namely by critically interacting with ecclesiological works by the three Korean Reformed theologians—Young-yup Cho, Jang-hyun Ryu and Hong-seok Choi—and secondly studying the distinct ecumenical backdrop of the Reformed churches in Korea that has especially been exteriorised in the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Busan in 2013. The ecclesiological works of the Faith and Order Commission and G. C. Berkouwer have been invited to attain further insights on the research question via theological analysis and examination. It has been done in light of their ecumenical contexts, particularly the ecclesiological development of Faith and Order and, for Berkouwer, beside his further theological explorations, his ecumenical involvement with the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches.

Speaking of the Korean Reformed ecclesiological thoughts, the investigation on the ecclesiological perspectives of Cho, Ryu, and Choi results in the verdict that the theological tension between unity and holiness cannot be resolved by an ecclesiological approach that is based on the abstraction of the Church, the scholastic distinction between the invisible-unchangeable Church and the visible-changeable Church, or the preferential option for unity in negligence of the serious treatment of holiness. The hierarchical treatment of unity or holiness disclosed either in filtering certain communities out of the discourse on unity itself by use of the purity factors—confessions and ethical standards—or the relativistic treatment of the holiness of the life and witness of the Church for the sake of visible unity has been deemed insufficient to render the Church as one and holy in accordance with the Scripture (Cf. Eph. 4:4-6, 1 Pet. 2:9).

It turns out that Faith and Order, alongside its ecumenical background, has exhibited tendency to set the visible unity of the Church at the centre in comparison to holiness. In this vein, various ecclesiological concepts have turned up in the ecclesiological development of Faith and Order, such as "all in each place" at New Delhi in 1961, "catholicity" with trinitarian and pneumatological emphasis at Uppsala in 1968, "conciliar fellowship" at Nairobi in 1974, "the elements of unity" such as baptism, eucharist and mutually recognised ministry (1982) and the common faith (1991), and so forth. Especially, "*koinonia*" that received increased attention in the ecclesiological framework in the second half of the twentieth century becomes the central aspect of the ecclesiology of *CTCV*, which, as a convergence document, attempts to integrate the nature and mission of the Church in one portrayal. Both unity and holiness are given the framework of "gift and calling" where the gift of unity and holiness is explained in terms of givenness and unassailability due to the Church's ontological dependence on the Triune God, putting forward the imperative of the calling for unity and holiness. Despite several significant ecclesiological insights such as *koinonia*, legitimate diversity, conciliarity, teleology of mission and so on, the prominence of the language of givenness on unity and holiness as well as the lopsided treatment of unity over holiness in its ecclesiological framework have been critiqued.

Berkouwer's ecclesiological thought expressed in *De Kerk I, II* has been observed against his ecumenical background, particularly his interaction with the ecumenical ecclesiology at the New Delhi Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1961 and *nouvelle théologie* in Roman Catholic Church up to the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). Moreover, it has been stated that his correlative approach is fully present in the ecclesiological work. Overall, Berkouwer's insights have been positively assessed and applied to the thesis of the dissertation, including his correlative approach, the centrality of the gospel, the relational

perspective on the Church, the concrete ecclesiology in view of the meaningfulness of *credo ecclesiam* in visible unity and holiness, the Word as *nota ecclesiae*, the interrelatedness between the unity of the Church and the one *homologia*, the newness of the Church in the Holy Spirit and so forth. Berkouwer suggests an idea that unity and holiness, not to mention catholicity and apostolicity, are to be considered in terms of interrelatedness, but does not provide further elaboration on "how".

In search of the way of bringing unity and holiness together in the Korean context, the dissertation has attempted to critically examine ecclesiological ideas and gather important insights from *CTCV* and *De Kerk I, II*. More contextually relevant subjects that are directly connected with unity and holiness in Korea have been touched upon—such as the practice of discipline, the church-individualism, the interdenominational relations, the relationship between the leadership and the lay believers, the problem of polarisation and so forth—though not comprehensively, via the established ecclesiological thesis. The thesis that has been developed is the "concurrent" approach, which has become a loaded concept with various theological connotations, but in this context hopes to overcome the limitation of a hierarchical or isolated treatment of unity and holiness via a theological explanation and implementation.

6.2. Research Findings

As the previous section indicates, the dissertation has put forward that the "concurrent" approach to unity and holiness is a better ecclesiological approach than hierarchical perspectives. Theological reasons together with several context-sensitive examples have been provided. However, more clarification with respect to the meaning of the "concurrent" approach is required, together with the illumination of its several core aspects. To begin, the notion of the "concurrence" between the unity and holiness of the Church in the dissertation points at the concrete reality of the Church "here and now" in the gift and calling of unity and holiness from God. It does not attempt to make the abstraction of the Church or to minimise the importance either of unity or holiness in life and witness, but it takes the calling of both seriously (Cf. Eph. 4:3, 1 Pet. 1:15-16). At the same time, "concurrence" denounces any approach that formally prioritises unity or holiness over against the other in ecclesiological formulation. It rather indicates the unfathomable mystery of their coexistence in the Church in Christ, which stems from the newness of its life in the indwelling of the Holy Spirit: "...the Spirit of God dwells in you (Rom. 8:9) [ESV]". The newness of the Church in the Spirit denotes the inexcusability of the perpetuation of disunity and the disregard to holiness. The newness of the fellowship with the Triune God in one Head and Shepherd—*unio cum Christo*—and the new reality of transformed living and discipleship—*Vorverständnis* and following Jesus Christ in his footsteps—in the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit come together as the one reality of the gift and calling of the Church. Also, it needs be mentioned that the word "mystery" above in no way signifies the convenient withdrawal into the abstract "unknown", but enunciates that "concurrence", instead of being a mere theoretical problem, comes together with "correlation" between the normative Word of God and the faithful obedience of the Church.

The correspondence of "concurrence" and "correlation" entails the understanding that "concurrence" of unity and holiness itself is the indicative and imperative (or gift and calling) of the Church. Additionally, due to the theological implications of "correlation" in Berkouwer, "concurrence" itself cannot simply be the product of human effort or intellectual quest, but is fundamentally the fruit of the faithful response of the Church to the gift and calling from the Triune God, which involves self-denial, repentance, obedience and absolute dependence on the grace of God in Jesus Christ. This vein of perspective on "concurrence" denotes a relational outlook on the Church accompanied by the understanding of the absolute lack of self-sufficiency or independency of the Church on its own. The Church is fundamentally related to Christ as the body of the Head and the flock of the Shepherd, and in

this relatedness, the Church is posited not above, but under the testing of the Word and the Spirit in its covenantal relationship with God, and is constantly reminded of its calling to reflect the light of Christ whenever it becomes dimmed or almost vanished from the surface. In this manner, the acute calling to the fellowship/*koinonia* of the local churches and the commitment to discipleship come together in the gift of the newness of fellowship with Christ and transformed life in the Holy Spirit. The unity and holiness of the Church, in this perspective, is identified by the deeper concern of manifesting the light of Christ in the one reality of the Church.

Another principal aspect of the "concurrence" between unity and holiness is the centrality of the gospel of Jesus Christ in its testing authority. It is a significant question especially in the context where the concern for truth is positioned in conflict with the concern for unity in ecclesiology. The "testing" authority of the gospel, when it is fully accepted, means the placement of every discourse of the Church, including that on unity and holiness, under its authority as well as the thorough examination of the life and witness of the Church in every possible aspect through its concentrated light. The adoption of the "centrality" of the gospel comes with the understanding that there could be no community of believers in the eschatological Spirit without the gospel of salvation, which was proclaimed by Jesus (Mk. 1:15), the apostles (Cf. 1 Cor. 15:1-22) and the historical churches afterwards.⁹⁰⁷ It means that Jesus Christ and the faith that retains the knowledge of the Saviour and His gospel are the real foundation of the Church, and will continue to be so.⁹⁰⁸ The Church's life and witness, in its complete reliance on the power of God, are called to reflect and be examined by this very concentrated light. The discourse on unity and holiness in the concurrent approach, therefore, is to be characterised by the centrality of the gospel.

In this line of thought, the "truth" question does not solely belong to the issue of holiness but equally to the matter of unity, the unity of *homologia*. As *homologia*, in its public character, involves the confessing person in mind and heart, the truth of the Church is the truth essentially concentrated on and directed to the Lord Jesus Christ as the King and the Saviour.⁹⁰⁹ This directed truth of the Church imbues not only the fullness of its missional teleology in the Holy Spirit, but the fact that the Church witnesses to the truth of God in the midst of the world "here and now". Here, the concept of "legitimate diversity" is of significance for the very reason that the *homologia* of the Church induces the understanding of the reality of the "gift and calling" of the common faith. It is primarily due to not only the legitimacy of the recognition of the diversity of contexts where the churches find themselves together with diverse challenges and questions, but also the very context-sensitiveness of the indwelling Spirit.⁹¹⁰ The common faith in this context is not to be considered a convenient excuse to prolong confessional plurality, but is to be regarded as the voice of sharp criticism in the midst of real dividedness.

Another area to be relatedly considered is the practice of discipline on the local or synodal level in that it, in its necessity, is to be placed under the testing of the gospel, as it is interlinked foundationally with the understanding that Jesus' commandment to love God and

⁹⁰⁷ Bright explicates the proclamation of the gospel in light of the continuity between the Old and the New Testament where the latter declares the Kingdom and reign of God through the Messiah in terms of the "already" whereas it comes with the future tense in the former (John Bright, *The Kingdom of God: The Biblical Concept and Its Meaning for the Church* (New York/Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1953), 190-198.).

⁹⁰⁸ '...*fundamentum*, hoc est, veram Christi cognitionem et fidem (Philip Melancthon, *Apologia Confessionis*, Art. VII-VIII, 20.)'.

⁹⁰⁹ Cf. William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature: A Translation and Adaption of the Fourth Revised and Augmented Edition of Walter Bauer's Griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der Übrigen Urchristlichen Literatur* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), 568.

⁹¹⁰ E. A. J. G. Van der Borght, *Sunday Morning - The Most Segregated Hour*, 22. See also, Cornelis van der Kooi, *This Incredibly Benevolent Force*, 38.

neighbours must determine the nature of the practice of discipline. It means that claiming the concern for truth does not justify disciplinarians if they show a lack of love as demonstrated by Jesus Christ. In addition, the "concurrence" between unity and holiness would refuse to perceive either unity or holiness in the interdenominational or ecumenical relations as a mere agenda of the Church, but is more concerned about earnestly discerning the mind of the Spirit of the truth and seeking to bear the fruit of the Spirit as the manifestation of unity and holiness (Cf. Jn. 15:26, 16:13, 1 Cor. 2:10-16, Gal: 5:22-25). The search for "concurrence" between unity and truth, accordingly, requires the full embrace of and the serious commitment to the gospel.

The Church journeys in the eschatological reality in which it has received the promise of salvation in Jesus Christ from the sovereign God as well as, in faith, the promised Holy Spirit, the guarantee of its inheritance, "to the praise of His glory (Eph. 1:7-14)". Its calling to unity and holiness is the calling to live by faith, which does not assert itself by adding to what it has received from God, but leads the Church to self-denial and the humble acceptance of God's truth in Christ. It is a concrete mandate to maintain the wonderful gift of God, and yet, as witnessed in the Scripture, the Church is hardly removed from all sorts of digression into dividedness and ungodliness. The concurrent approach to unity and holiness, in this sense, entails the strong sense of concreteness: the visibility of the unity and holiness of the Church. The image of walking the "gritty path" and "being covered with dirt" is evoked in this same vein. This understanding suggests that the Church might find an insight from the passage of Peter walking on the violent water towards Jesus when he responded to Jesus' call "Come". Walking on the water, his fear of the wind, meaning the dominance of doubt instead of faith, led him to sink and cry out to Jesus "Lord, save me". At this shout, as Jesus "reached out his hand and took hold of him", the voice of the Lord is heard in the midst of the undulating, vicious waves: "O you little faith, why did you doubt? (Matt. 14:24-32) [ESV]". This narrative captures the real and concrete presence of the cold and threatening waves, just as the visible presence of Jesus Christ is right before the disciple. The Church's fall and digression in the manifestation of dividedness and ungodliness are as concrete as Peter's own fall into the waves due to the lack of faith. The outcry for the painfulness of the division of the churches and for the receding light of holiness in their life and witness is a response to the concrete sense of reality. Recognising this makes it impossible for the Church to be content with the ecclesiological proposals that count on the theoretical abstraction about the Church or the approaches that are characterised by theological subjectivism, but will seek the answer in faith only in Jesus Christ and his truth.

The concurrence between unity and holiness critically challenges the current forms of Reformed ecclesiology in Korea, which pivot around the lopsided emphasis on either unity or holiness. As explained above, this is not an endeavour to fathom a neutral middle way between more conservative and more progressive approaches. Together with the encompassed theological contents, the concurrent approach offers an ecclesiological framework, which addresses the Church as the one reality in the Lord without idealising it in an abstract manner or dechristianising it via dogmatic subjectivism. Even though the discussion was in no way exhaustive in width and depth, this perspective would suggest another way to approach the theological and practical issues embedded in ecclesiology that are directly linked to the concern for unity and holiness in the Korean context. Above all, the very directedness of the Church to the Triune God, as the togetherness of concurrence and correlation suggests and intimates the ultimate teleology of the Church in life and witness—exceeding any other purposes—that calls for the concrete materialisation: *Soli Deo Gloria*, giving glory to God 'to whom all glory and honour belong'—now and always (2 Thess. 1:5-11, Rev. 4:11, 7:9-12).⁹¹¹

⁹¹¹ Bauckham cites Rev. 4:11, 5:12, 7:12 and 19:1 to show the regular appearance of doxologies in the Book of Revelation (Richard Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 135-136.)

6.3. Further Research Suggestions

Provided the research output of the dissertation, not a few further research questions can be generated. First, in regards to dogmatic subjects, it seems essential to look into how the concurrent perspective would be implemented specifically in discussion on the catholicity and apostolicity of the Church. Catholicity and apostolicity are not unrelated to unity and holiness in the sense that the affinity is generally envisioned between unity and catholicity—'the one Church' as 'the body of Christ' in all places and times—and between holiness and apostolicity—the discernment of the true Church via the lens of the preservation of the apostolic teaching and succession.⁹¹² The study on catholicity and apostolicity by the concurrent approach would be an important dogmatic quest especially in view of the possibility of renewing an ecumenical discourse in Korean context. The nuance detected in "renewing" denotes the importance of the critical testing of existent discourses and the search of fresh insights from the Reformed perspective. Helping build a legitimate theological bridge that leads to the extended exploration of the sound shape and form of ecumenical ecclesiology and practice is a desirable outcome of further research.

In addition, the query over catholicity and apostolicity in this outlook seems quite meaningful in that the scope of the investigation exhibits an attention to the past, the present, and the future. Its significance in this sense will be made more visible when it engages with the emerging needs for theological answers in the context of changing human life with rapid scientific and technological development. In the extremely fast-paced digitalised living, the vast ocean of continuously updated information absorbs human attention into the momentary present, whereas scepticism about and even disinterest in the value of the past is anticipated. A legitimate answer to the verifiability and credulity of the truth of tradition itself is called for.⁹¹³ Approaching with the biblical and confessional groundwork, a contemporary theological enquiry over the catholicity and apostolicity of the Church should reckon with this reality. This theological work, then, must possess the power of appeal to the faith by maintaining the character of concreteness and legitimacy by not shying away from contextual challenges and struggles while being authentically established in the confessional tradition.

Second, it seems profitable to pay more attention to the pneumatological accent in ecclesiological discourse. The presence and work of the Holy Spirit in connection with the Church need to be investigated further in correlation to the faith. More discourse is needed in the inquiry over the life and witness of the Church in light of the role of the Spirit, involving the understanding of Him in soteriological or creational terms, him as "the Spirit of truth (Jn. 15:26, 16:13)", and as the judge (Jn. 16:8-11). Moreover, it is significant to work on how to approach the gifts of the Spirit—*charismata*—in connection with the nature and mission of the Church, which have christological and pneumatological implications. This work is especially significant insofar as the churches in Korea are willing to take seriously the multiple facets of the work of the Holy Spirit, including soteriological and creational

⁹¹² Cf. Richard J. Plantinga, Thomas R. Thompson and Matthew D. Lundberg, *An Introduction to Christian Theology*, 346-347.

⁹¹³ Stiver's observation that 'the computer imposes its time—the nanosecond—on people' sheds light on the contemporary human life with numerous digital devices and the internet where humans, in their way of living and thinking, have adjusted to the devices' ever-increasing speed of processing the vast amount of information in the form of texts and visual images (Richard Stivers, *Shades of Loneliness: Pathologies of a Technological Society* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2004), 35-38.). The lack of in-depth interpersonal and fellowship among the people that touch on even the realm of deep reality in human subjectivity and the further isolation of individuals are also linked to further scepticism on the trustworthiness and value of the confessional tradition of the past. One of the reasons would be the lack of their personal relatability to the concept of "confessional tradition" that essentially involves the most deep and acute sense of sharedness of faith among the group of people across time and space.

dimensions.⁹¹⁴ Such perspective would provide a sound theological grounding for the churches to theologically as well as practically engage with the public issues outside the confines of their communities, e.g. socio-political polarisation in the nation and the treatment of poor and marginalised groups including the elderly, the homeless, the people of colours and immigrants.⁹¹⁵

Furthermore, the pneumatological input would be vital if ecclesiology intends to adequately reflect the contextuality of the Church and its mission in contemporary Korea. The contextuality involves the shift in the socio-cultural, economic and ideological backdrop against which the Church lives and witnesses to Christ, and there will be requests for the ecclesiological articulation of the diversified forms of churches and ministries. Young-dal Cho indicates the increased numbers of multicultural families in the nation,⁹¹⁶ and the figure is expected to grow even further in the coming years. This phenomenon asks a great deal of challenging questions in the fields of ecclesiology, missiology, and public theology. Speaking of ecclesiology and missiology, the churches in Korea need to critically reflect on whether the current ecclesiological frameworks would be able to satisfactorily deal with the increasingly multicultural reality in the churches. These are not trivial problems especially because the ethnographic shift into a more multicultural reality encompasses the diversification of socio-cultural identities, which begs the question regarding how to identify and interpret the embeddedness of socio-cultural factors in the current forms of belief structure and practices of churches.⁹¹⁷ Pneumatological accentuation is to endow ecclesiology with a strong sense of dynamicity and context-sensitiveness where the exaltation of Christ and the conviction of His gospel are substantiated by stimulating practical and missiological scrutiny.⁹¹⁸ As for public theology, the creational and redemptive truth of the Triune God should fill the persuasive discourse in the social, political and economic issues within the nation that is increasingly becoming multicultural.

Last but not least, it should be regarded as an ecclesiological task to seek a legitimate and relevant way of being the Church in a way that the continuity of the Church and its missional nature are fully expressed in changing contextual situations. The contemporary phenomenon of the mushrooming of free and emergent churches in the Western world has been considered, regardless of being more positively or negatively assessed, a reaction to recent challenges that the traditional churches have encountered.⁹¹⁹ The Korean churches, in the face of contemporary difficulties and challenges, cannot afford to ignore or have a mere condemning attitude towards the concerns about "how" to appropriately respond to the impact of the vicissitudes of socio-political, ethnic, religious, and technological changes. Any complacency reliant on the caricatures of these apprehensions does not help facilitate a deepened ecclesiological and practical consideration of the Church in the present and the future.⁹²⁰ Not

⁹¹⁴ To read the explanation of 'the "Creator Spirit"', see Richard J. Plantinga, Thomas R. Thompson and Matthew D. Lundberg, *An Introduction to Christian Theology*, 305-306. It is believed that, even if certain Reformed traditions would uphold secessionism, they would be able to discover broader insights from biblical reflection on the Holy Spirit than strictly soteriological connotations only.

⁹¹⁵ Cf. Won-young Son, *Theopraxis Ecclesiology*, 216.

⁹¹⁶ Youngdal Cho, "Policy Note: Diversification of the Student Population and Multicultural Educational Policies in Korea", in *Globalization, Changing Demographics, and Educational Challenges in East Asia (Research in the Sociology of Education, Volume 17)*, ed. by Emily Hannum, Hyunjoon Park and Yuko Goto Butler, (Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing, 2010), 183-186. See also, Sebastian C. H. Kim and Kirsteen Kim, *A History of Korean Christianity*, 305.

⁹¹⁷ Cf. Eduardus A. J. G. Van der Borgh, 'No Longer Strangers or Pilgrims in the Church?', 441-442.

⁹¹⁸ Cf. Cornelis van der Kooi, *This Incredibly Benevolent Force*, 34-38.

⁹¹⁹ Cf. CTCV, 7. See also, John Walker, *Testing Fresh Expressions: Identity and Transformation* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 24.

⁹²⁰ Cf. Craig Van Gelder, *The Essence of the Church: A Community Created by the Spirit* (Michigan: Baker Books, 2000), 30-32, 40-42.

only responsible but also audacious efforts are needed in ecclesiology so as to ascertain that the light of the gospel and the truth of the Scripture will be continuously shed on the Church and the world for God's glory.

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[Summary]

The dissertation attempts to find a way to bring the unity and holiness of the Church together in Reformed ecclesiology in Korean context. It started with a question if the unity and holiness of the Church can be addressed together without polarisation in a Reformed ecclesiological discourse in Korea. The context in which the question was formed is nothing other than the history of division and the ongoing dividedness of Korean churches – especially among the Reformed churches. The problem of the division was made even more apparent in the conflicting attitudes towards the World Council of Churches against the backdrop of the 10th Assembly at Busan in 2013. In this context, the way in which the unity and holiness of the Church should be perceived, manifested, and approached emerged as a critical issue where churches were sharply divided. This phenomenon was a reflection of the history of division among the Presbyterian churches, and proved that the matter of the adequate understanding of the unity and holiness of the Church was still indeed an ongoing problem for them. Unless it is ecclesologically dealt with, mere organisational attempts to unite churches will continue to fail in the end, merely mirroring the concrete and actual state of the current division of churches. Against this backdrop, it is realised that an adequate and constructive theological thesis needs to be attempted that enables the outlook on the togetherness of the unity and holiness of the Church. While being mainly theological in dealing with the principles in ecclesiology, it addresses the Korean ecclesial context with its own unique characteristics and sensitivities.

In order for a constructive theological thesis to emerge, the dissertation engages with two ecclesiological resources that might offer important insights for the research. First, it is deemed that a proper and mature ecumenical ecclesiology might be helpful, so the Faith and Order's convergence document on ecclesiology *The Church: Towards A Common Vision* (2013) is studied along with the context of its ecumenical development. The ecclesiological convergence document of Faith and Order is considered a worthy theological dialogue partner because it was an ecumenical achievement in the field of ecclesiology after the long process of ecumenical discussions, publications and other major achievements, such as *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (1982). A sheer number of denominations, including the churches from the Reformed tradition, participated in this ecumenical process, striving for an ecclesiological answer for the unity and mission of the Church together. For this reason, the ecclesiology of Faith and Order deserves to be regarded an important theological dialogue partner, considering that the goal of the dissertation is to provide a constructive thesis for a Reformed ecclesiology in Korea. In order to study the content of the convergence document properly, the relevant aspects of the context and historical development of Faith and Order within the history of the World Council of Churches should be researched. Together with this, the text of the convergence document on ecclesiology needs be investigated with an outlook on the subject of the unity and holiness of the Church. Chapter 2 attempts this research, and the aim of the chapter is an adequate comprehension of Faith and Order's ecclesiological perspective on the unity and holiness of the Church as manifested in *The Church: Towards A Common Vision* (2013).

Another dialogue partner for a constructive ecclesiological proposal is Gerrit Cornelis Berkouwer. It is due to his confessional background in the Reformed tradition and his distinct ecumenical engagement with the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches. Another factor is the fact that Berkouwer's ecclesiological works *De Kerk I, II* (1970, 1972) show his mature ecclesiological thoughts, since they were composed late in his career after his involvement with the New Delhi Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1961 and the Second Vatican Council from 1962 to 1965 as an observer. This distinct contextual element makes his ecclesiological thinking unique, and for this reason, his ecclesiology should be considered a significant material for a constructive Reformed ecclesiology. In order to comprehend his ecclesiology, the development of his theological and ecclesiological thoughts formed through his interaction with other theologians and his ecumenical involvement must be studied. Moreover, the concept of "correlation" that he

employs consistently in his *Dogmatische Studiën*, of which his works on ecclesiology are the last ones, must be taken into account. Then, his ecclesiological works need to be analysed, and especially his understanding of the unity and holiness of the Church must be given focussed attention. Chapter 3 provides such investigation, including the context of Berkouwer's theology, the concept of "correlation" in his theological thinking, and his ecclesiological view on the unity and holiness of the Church.

To put this research in the Korean Reformed context, the relevant information on the ecumenical history and status quo of the Reformed churches is provided, followed by the theological investigation of the ecclesiological perspectives of three Korean theologians: Young-yup Cho, Jang-hyun Ryu and Hong-seok Choi. First of all, the information on the ecumenical context of the Reformed churches in Korea revolves around the event of the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 2013, since it revealed the nature of the conflict in ecclesiology among the conflicting groups. The points of conflict are presented, and further historical analysis is given only to the relevant historical events and points of debate. However, since the dissertation does not pursue a comparative ecclesiology in Korea, but intends to provide a constructive thesis for a Korean Reformed ecclesiology, the scope is narrowed down to the Reformed churches. For a constructive ecclesiology, the ecclesiologies of the three theologians from the Reformed tradition are analysed. The three figures are carefully selected, since they profess distinct ecclesiological ideas and theological proclivities with dissimilar takes on the subject of the unity and holiness of the Church. Young-yup Cho firmly stands on the confessional, militant and conservative ground, and he consistently showed a great interest in the theology of the World Council of Churches in his writings. Jang-hyun Ryu is more on the progressive side in theology, and has continued to write on ecclesiology in his career. Hong-seok Choi is studied because of the distinct character of his ecclesiology. Choi was a professor at Chong-shin Theological Seminary, which is affiliated with Hap-dong denomination. And yet, he showed a unique theological inclination that resists both objectivism and subjectivism in theologising. This tendency is clearly visible in his work on ecclesiology, and makes it different from a typical conservative ecclesiology. For these reasons, the three theologians' ecclesiologies are analysed, while focussing on the subject of the unity and holiness of the Church. Chapter 4 deals with these elements of research, and critiques on the ecclesiologies of Cho, Ryu and Choi are made in this chapter, as well, in order to move on to a constructive thesis in the next chapter.

The constructive thesis that the dissertation attempts is aimed at finding a possible way in which unity and holiness are formed together in ecclesiological discourse, so that it would be able to do full justice to "*credo ecclesiam*", which all the Reformed churches in Korea would confess. It is done in Chapter 5. In this chapter, critical examination on the ecclesiological ideas of *The Church: Towards A Common Vision* and *De Kerk I, II* is provided together with the identification of important ecclesiological insights for a constructive thesis. Insights from the ecclesiologies of Cho, Ryu and Choi are brought into play, as well. The resultant ecclesiological proposal is a "concurrent" approach or "concurrence", which is rather a loaded concept and combined with the correlative approach derived from Berkouwer's theology. This concept addresses the principles in ecclesiology, and in this sense, it is a limited proposal. And yet, ecclesiastical practices in Korean context relevant to the unity and holiness of the Church are brought into discussion, and the concept of "concurrence" applies to them in this chapter. Despite its limitedness, it is believed that a "concurrent" approach positively contributes to a fresh reflection on the unity and holiness of the Church in Reformed ecclesiology in Korea. Further conceptual articulation of "concurrence" is provided in the concluding chapter (Chapter 6).